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ABSTRACT

This report is the fifth in a series reporting data from a ten-year longitudinal study of a random sample of the 1966 entering freshman class at State University of New York-Buffalo. Students were asked to describe their reactions to the University experience, attitudes and opinions about the University, involvement in University life, and attitudes toward faculty and course work. They saw the functions of a university as fostering personal development of students, providing academic experiences, service to community and society, and vocational preparation. They regarded the University atmosphere as liberal, academically competitive, and conducive to their maturing. Most of these students reported some out-of-class contacts with faculty and said that such student-faculty relationships enhanced learning by making it less impersonal. In looking back over their four years, a majority reported that academic experiences were a source of satisfaction, that their personal development was the most valuable of their experiences, and that interpersonal relationships were the most meaningful of their experiences. Their most frequent advice to a high school senior was, "Go to college." (Author)

ED 088404

A Biography of a Class Study

the university experience

the fourth year

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THE UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

The Fourth Year

Part I

1966 Freshman Class

Marilyn A.H. Rott

Student Testing and Research
State University of New York at Buffalo
1973

I think the motto for our school is pretty good, "Let all become all he is capable of becoming." Just to let a person grow emotionally and personally, if he wants it, educationally, open up his mind.

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The students - whose cooperation in providing the data made this report possible.

FOREWORD

In 1964, University Research, now Student Testing and Research, established a developmental research project entitled Biography of a Class. The purpose of the project is to describe characteristics of the students to faculty administrators, and students, and to contribute to existing research in higher education.

Research was begun with the 1964-65 Freshman Class. To date, seven series of census reports for the 1964 through 1970 freshman classes collectively entitled Freshman Class Status Report, five survey reports of graduating classes 1969-71, four interview studies of the 1966 freshmen, and one interview study of 1967 freshmen have been published.*

This report is the fifth in the series based on interview data from a randomly selected sample of 100 students of the 1966 freshmen clas. The focus of Part I is on the University related aspects of their University experience during the academic year 1969-70, the fourth year of the interview project.

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*A list of these reports with a brief description of their contents is available upon request from Student Testing and Research, 316 Harriman Library, SUNY/B.

ABSTRACT

This report is the fifth in a series reporting data from a ten-year longitudinal study of a random sample of the 1966 entering freshman class at SUNY/B. Students were asked to describe their reactions to the University experience, attitudes and opinions about the University, involvement in University life, and attitudes toward faculty and course work. They saw the functions of a university as fostering personal development of students, providing academic experiences, service to community and society, and vocational preparation. They regarded the University atmosphere as liberal, academically competitive, and conducive to their maturing. Most of these students reported some out-of-class contacts with faculty and said that such student-faculty relationships enhanced learning by making it less impersonal. In looking back over their four years, a majority reported that academic experiences were a source of satisfaction, that their personal development was the most valuable of their experiences, and that interpersonal relationships were the most meaningful of their experiences. Their most frequent advice to a high school senior was, "Go to college."

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INTRODUCTION

The past decade has been a period of stress for American higher education. Pressures of increasing enrollment, demands for relevance, attention to current social issues, and incidents of violence became a part of the American college scene. It was a time of rapidly occurring changes. At SUNY/B in particular, these last few years included rapid expansion of facilities, faculty, and programs. This period was followed by one of limited growth and retrenchment when resources became suddenly less available. In addition to the academic modifications, social aspects of the University experience were also changing. Rules for residents became fewer, and activity and influence of fraternities and sororities declined while student participation in various on and off-campus causes increased. Demonstrations, rallies, demands, and even strikes and violence became a part of the University experience, here and elsewhere. What of the students who were a part of the University community during this time of change and stress? What were their reactions to the University experience?

This longitudinal study provides information about the experience of some students who lived through this turbulent period. The data were gathered from interviews conducted in an atmosphere marked by openness and personal contact during the four years following their enrollment at the University. This report is based on interviews conducted in the spring of the fourth year and provides information which can contribute to an understanding of the interaction between the student and the University.

CHAPTER I

GENERAL METHOD

The design of this ten-year study of students who entered the State University of New York at Buffalo (SUNY/B) in 1966 provides for five interviews - one in each semester of the freshman year and one in the second semester of the three succeeding years - plus six questionnaires - one in each of the six years thereafter. It is assumed that the myriad subtle, and not so subtle, changes which occur during this period are invaluable to an understanding of the late-adolescent and early-adult years of college students.

Sample

A random sample of 100 students, stratified by sex and residence, was selected from the approximately 2000 freshmen who were graduated from high school in the spring of 1966 and enrolled in SUNY/B in September 1966.

The composition of the original proportional sample (1966) and 1970 sample are presented in Tables 1.1 and 1.2. For the fifth interview, held in the spring of the fourth year, 77 of the original students responded, 70 by interview and 7 by questionnaire. Eleven of these students* had withdrawn from school, and five had transferred to other institutions of higher education.

TABLE 1.1 COMPOSITION OF ORIGINAL PROPORTIONAL SAMPLE

	Men	Women	Total
Residents	21	22	43
Commuters	36	21	57
Total	57	43	100

*Although some interviewees were no longer students at any college or university, for ease of presentation the term "students," used throughout this report, includes those who had withdrawn, unless otherwise stated in the text. Separate references to transferees or dropouts are made only when their responses differed noticeably from those of students registered at SUNY/B during the semester of the interview.

TABLE 1.2 COMPOSITION OF FOURTH YEAR INTERVIEW SAMPLE

1970	Residents (in 1966) Men	Women	Commuters (in 1966) Men	Women	Total
SUNY/B	17	11	23	10	61
Drop-Out	1	3	3	4	11
Transfer	-	3	1	1	5
Total	18	17	27	15	77

Residence is defined by the housing of each student during his initial semester at SUNY/B (fall 1966). At that time freshmen were required to live either in University housing (residents) or with their families (commuters). As the years passed, some students from both defined residence groups elected a third option of establishing their own households, usually in an apartment. The residence status of the sample in the fourth year is shown in Table 1.3.

TABLE 1.3 RESIDENCE STATUS IN THE FOURTH YEAR

Apartment	37
Family home	31
University housing	7
Other	2
Total	77

Because of the reduced size and change in residence status of the fourth year sample, data are not reported by sex/residence categories in this report as they have been in the previous interview studies.

Enrollment of the fourth year interview sample in the six undergraduate faculties of the University followed the same pattern as in the third year interview. Nearly half the students, a greater percentage of men (56%), especially resident men (63%), than women (35%), were enrolled in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Administration. It was chosen by more students in every group except commuter women. The latter most frequently chose a major in Faculty of Arts and Letters, the second most popular Faculty both for these interviewees and for the total 1970 graduating class of SUNY/B (Table 1.4). The interview sample's enrollment in Faculties followed a pattern very similar to that of the 1970 graduates of SUNY/B except that this sample had fewer engineering majors. However, not all the students in the fourth year sample were graduated in 1970 (See Academic Plans, p. 80).

TABLE 1.4 ENROLLMENT IN FACULTIES IN THE FOURTH YEAR

FACULTY	1970 Interview Sample RM	CM	RW	CW	TOTAL	1970 SUNY/B Graduates*
	--- % of students ---					
Social Sciences and Administration	63	52	50	20	49	48
Arts and Letters	19	4	21	40	17	16
Health Sciences	6	13	14	20	13	11
Educational Studies	-	9	29	20	8	7
Natural Science and Mathematics	13	9	7	-	8	8
Engineering	-	17	-	-	6	11
Special Major	-	-	7	-	2	
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	*(16)*	*(23)*	*(14)*	*(10)*	*(63)*	*2072*
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	*(16)*	*(23)*	*(16)*	*(10)*	*(65)***	*2072*

*Unpublished data provided by Jane Faulman. Additional information on 1970 SUNY/B seniors can be found in Faulman, Jane, *1970 Senior Survey*, University Research, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1971.

**Includes two students with double majors.

Interview Schedule

The interview in the fourth year was the most extensive one in the series. In addition to the core questions which had been asked in earlier interviews, the 1970 schedule included a number of questions which focused on changes or differences over the four year period of the University experience.* It also included questions which probed more intensively into self-description and perceptions, relationships with peers, and attitudes toward marriage and family roles. These subjects will be discussed in Part II of the fourth year study.

Parallel interview schedules were prepared for transferees and drop-outs. While a majority of questions were the same as for registered students, few of the questions reported here were appropriate to students not enrolled at SUNY/B. Several questions were uniquely applicable to those who had left SUNY/B. Those data will be reported in an attrition study.

Method

All fourth year interviews were conducted by one interviewer. With some exceptions, all students who were registered at SUNY/B were asked each question on the interview schedule, although not necessarily in a given order. To provide as natural a situation as possible, the interviewer changed the ordering of questions if the student introduced a topic covered in another section of the interview schedule. Further, if a student provided an answer to a given question while discussing another topic, he was not explicitly asked that question later.

All students, including drop-outs and transferees, are retained in the sample for the 10-year period. Whether each appears in a given interview sample is a function of his or her availability and willingness to participate. As time has elapsed since these students began as freshmen, some students have increased their geographical distance from the University, decreasing their availability.

For this fifth interview, three people were interviewed by phone, and seven provided written responses to the questionnaire. The others were interviewed in person. Interview appointments were scheduled for two hours. If an additional half an hour or more was anticipated as needed to ask remaining questions, another appointment was made to complete the interview.

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*On the copy of the interview schedule appearing in the Appendix, the new questions are marked by an asterisk.

Coding

Interviews were tape-recorded with the knowledge and consent of the student, and transcribed verbatim. References to the student's name, his student number, names of individual faculty members or friends were deleted to insure the confidential nature of the interview. Each transcript was proofread against the original tape to assure accuracy of transcription.

Coding of the data was done from transcripts of the interviews. Coders noted every response to each question regardless of whether it was an answer to the stimulus question or a part of another reply. Initially the transcripts were read and indexed; the location of the response to each question was recorded on an index sheet. The specific responses to each topic were compiled on code sheets and then combined into major categories or dimensions for presentation in tables. Most of the dimensions used to present information in the tables, and hence to provide the framework for discussion of responses in the text, had already been developed in earlier studies in this interview study sequence. Others, for new questions, were developed empirically from the responses of the interviewees. The structure of the emergent dimensions was similar throughout this study.

Major Dimensions

As this interview project evolved during the first interviews, several of the questions became focused by asking students to respond along three dimensions: social, personal, and academic. In the second interview three question areas had those specified dimensions; in the third interview four questions were so focused, and in the fourth interview, five questions. In the fourth interview, however, the academic dimension was expanded to intellectual and vocational. None of the question areas in this fifth interview specified the dimensions, but as the data were being sorted for presentation, responses to several questions fell into the three dimensions of social, personal, and academic defined as follows:

> Social (interpersonal) concerned with interpersonal experiences, understanding and expressing sympathetic concern for others: persons in specific close relationships and humanity in general.
>
> Personal (self-development) concerned with self, feelings, capacities, needs, identity and maturity, values and goals.
>
> Academic (intellectual/university) pertains to out-of-class learning experiences as well as those in formal academic settings, and to the general University, which provides an opportunity for a total learning experience via exposure to new and different ideas, people, and things in an atmosphere of free inquiry.

Vocational preparation or development of job-oriented competencies is usually reported as a separate dimension, but is occasionally included as part of the academic dimension when the number of responses is very few.

These descriptions of the major dimensions establish a basis for coding many of the students' responses. The definitions, while generally helpful, do not eliminate all problems of overlapping categories. In general, couldn't every experience be described as contributing in some way to personal development? However, the greatest difficulty in coding was found in the academic (intellectual/university) dimension because of the possibility of a shift in emphasis within that definition. Sometimes the response emphasis is clearly on the intellectual/scholarly aspects; at other times a broader focus of total University is the emphasis presented. For example, in order to reflect the spirit of students' responses describing university atmosphere and environment, the presentation of the academic dimension is subdivided into academic/intellectual and university: liberalism and diversity. These distinctions are made in an effort to reflect the spontaneous organization or emphasis which emerged with student responses while nonetheless maintaining major dimensions as a stable base for organizing responses.

Organization of Results

The increased length of the fourth year interview resulted in extensive transcripts containing a mass of data to be coded and analyzed. In an effort to cope with so much data, the topics covered by the interview were divided into related sets. This report presents those data which focus on the University aspects of the students' experience. Self-descriptions, changes in personal attitudes and values, family and other interpersonal relationships are not included here but will be presented in later reports.

This report is based on responses to twenty-three of the fifty-three major areas of questions which comprised the interview schedule. These questions deal mainly with the students' reactions to his interactions with the University and his perceptions of how a university should function. Also included are responses to several questions which dealt with the most valued, meaningful, or satisfying experiences of these students during the four years of their University experience. Questions on which this report is based are typed in upper case in the interview schedule in the Appendix.

The data are presented in three ways. First, impressionistic generalizations are given. Where differences were evident, comparisons of responses of sex/residence groups and SUNY/B students/transferees and drop-outs are made.

Second, to complement these generalizations, tables are presented. Dimensions of students' responses to each question and the percentage of students who gave such responses to each question are reported. Data from different groups of students were usually not sufficiently different to warrant separate tabulation. Transfers and drop-outs were not included in all tables because of the differences in interview schedules. In the text, an analysis of the responses shown in the tables is provided.

To eliminate the repeated use of percentages in the text, the following terms are used to denote a corresponding range of percentages:

Most	=	more than 75%
Many	=	50% - 75%
Some	=	25% - 50%
A few A number	=	less than 25%

Finally, to provide interesting and pertinent examples of students' responses, quotations illustrative of various themes and dimensions are included. Quotations were not edited to change the grammatical structure, but only to delete superfluous phrases such as "uh, you know."

Results are presented and discussed by topic area, rather than in the order in which questions were asked.

Interpretations of Tables

The data presented in the tables of this study* and in all previous ones except the first in this series** are reported in the *percentage of students* who responded in a given way to a specific question. Because of the diminished number of interviewees, data are not presented in sex/residence categories as they had been in previous studies.

Categories in some of the tables are mutually exclusive, e.g., a student either worked or did not. Most questions, however, allowed an unlimited number of responses: a student may cite more than one characteristic of the University atmosphere, or he may have both positive and negative reactions to his courses, and each is coded and reported.

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*Tables 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, and 3.11 excepted.

**Kubiniec, C.M., Wyant, H.S., Alberti, J.M., *The University Experience, the first few weeks*, University Research, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1967, in which tables contain only the number of responses and respondents, not percentages.

Because of this variation, each table includes a report of the total number of responses to a particular question as well as the total number of students who responded to that question. When several independent responses are possible, the total number of responses will exceed the total number of students. Further, in the case of multiple responses, the percentages shown in categories and/or subcategories are not necessarily additive and their sum may be greater than 100 percent.

When responses of fewer than 77 students are reported in a table, it is because a codable response was not given, or the question was not asked of every student. Only 7 of the questions included in this report were applicable to drop-outs or transferees. Also in a number of cases, a given student was not asked a question because of lack of time or oversight.

The interview group is frequently referred to as *these students* to avoid implying that the reactions of these students are the reactions of all students. Further, in those few cases in which differences between sex/residence groups are cited, statements referring to differences among groups are not based on tests of statistical significance.

CHAPTER II

PERCEPTIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT

The perceptions of students about the functions of a University and the role students should assume with the administration and faculty in the decision-making process can reveal a great deal about what they seek from the University experience. Their descriptions of campus atmosphere, their impressions as to whether this environment is conducive to maturing, and their recollection of changes in the University since they matriculated create a picture of the University as these students saw it.

Descriptions and reactions of these student participant-observers can enrich the understanding of faculty and administration, the other participant-observers, when they appraise the ongoing impact and directions of change in the SUNY/B environment. Some of the students' more personal reactions to their experiences at the University will be presented in a later chapter. In this chapter the major focus is their descriptions of the milieu in which they encountered their University experience.

Functions of a University

What do these students see as the functions of the University? Do they expect it to serve primarily the interests of the students, of scholars, of the nearby community, or society in general? Students gave responses in all of those categories, but most frequently they cited provision of opportunities for personal growth and development of students. Second most frequently, they described the University as working with knowledge - imparting existing knowledge to a new generation as well as seeking new knowledge. The third-ranked function was service to society and the community of various kinds: being involved and preparing students for involvement with the nearby community, as an example or conscience, examining existing attitudes and values, and promoting a broader awareness and concern for worldwide issues. Finally, almost a third of the students specified vocational preparation of students as a function of the University (Table 2.1).

Students had no difficulty in listing functions of a university; the number of responses averaged slightly over three per student. They apparently see no single function but rather several complementary or overlapping ones. To illustrate their responses accurately, some of the quotations presented are exerpts which show only the portion referring to the topic under discussion, but others are more fully presented and include reference to more than one function.

TABLE 2.1 FUNCTIONS OF A UNIVERSITY

FUNCTIONS		% of students
Personal Growth and Development of Students		78
Encourage each student to discover and develop his or her potential through a variety of experiences including recreation	42	
Encourage each student to develop his or her personal standards and values	36	
Encourage self-reliance, independence/prepare students to be leaders	14	
Encourage each student's capacity for getting along with and relating to others	14	
Serve the students, offer what they want to learn	8	
Academic/Intellectual		65
Impart existing knowledge, culture	51	
Provide intellectual and aesthetic stimulation for students	14	
Seek and discover new knowledge	10	
Concentrate on teaching services	10	
Service to Society and Community		42
Prepare students for community involvement	17	
Provide within the University population an example for society of heterogeneity (socio-economic status, race, age, beliefs)	12	
Be closely involved with surrounding community/ provide continuing education services	12	
Examine existing societal values, attitudes	12	
Lead in initiating changes in society	10	
Promote a broader awareness and interest in worldwide concerns	10	
Provide Vocational Preparation for Students		31
Other		2
NUMBER OF STUDENTS		(59)
NUMBER OF RESPONSES		(182)

The academic function of teaching you, coming here for knowledge, and there's also like a social recreation type of function, too. I don't think that a university would be very good if it was all work, and offers no sort of recreation or outside type of learning; ability to learn things outside of just the classroom without lectures, films and demonstrations and things like that. I think that besides the academic, there's cultural and a social function. And then again there's the function, I don't know if you can call it a living function, but still, providing a place to sleep and places to eat and to carry on the things that you have to do in order to live.

Growth and Development of Students

Most students (78%) described various facets of personal development within the university function of providing opportunities for growth. The most frequent response, given by a majority of men (52%) but fewer women (20%) was that the University should encourage each student to discover and develop his or her talents. Ideally the University was expected to furnish a variety of experiences: academic, personal, social and recreational all of which would challenge students to achieve their potential.

Over one-third of the students said that experiences at the University should promote maturity of students and encourage each student to determine and establish his own standards and values. A few others added that the University should provide opportunities for independence and foster the development of leadership among students. A similar number of students thought that the University should develop and foster each student's capacity to get along with and relate to others. All of these responses describe the maturation and development of each student as an individual. Ideally a student should become mature, independent, self-motivated, cognizant of his own beliefs and identity, and able to relate well to others as a function of his or her university experience.

I really feel that a University is just a place where we all sit for four years, explore new things and grow up.

Primarily to offer courses in different things. It's a place for a person to mature, to give them a chance to do different things.

To educate people, to give people a chance to expand themselves, to become more rounded.

A few students stressed that the function of the University was to serve student needs - that whatever students identified and desired as educational experiences should be provided by the University.

I think the function is to serve the students' needs not the University's... it should encourage the initiative of each person, not rigid standards, rigid course, and let each individual try and develop in whichever way his bent lies... It's there for advice and it's for the student. It shouldn't serve anybody else. It shouldn't serve the government for research; it shouldn't serve the teachers for research. The student is the most important thing.

Basically it should help each individual. It should help him to be able to attain his own goal. Like perhaps the model of this university ought to be the model of every university.

Academic/Intellectual

Nearly two-thirds of the students saw the function of the University as working with knowledge in some way. A majority, commuters (70%) more than residents (33%), said the University should impart existing knowledge. In addition to passing along existing knowledge, a few students said that a function of the University was to seek and discover new knowledge.

A lot of people can pick up and explore various facets of the world which you would just like to know more about, and actual structured courses is a relatively easy way of learning it compared to going out and finding out all the information for yourself, and the University presents that opportunity to you.

You could say it's the search for truth, whatever that is, assimilating knowledge, preparing people for careers.

After you've gone to school, there's certain things here that help, like most people that go to college, they read books more. They are culturally aware of things, and they become more involved in things.

A few students said that the University should provide intellectual and aesthetic stimulation for students, i.e., encourage their intellectual skills and their cultural development. Others added that the focus of the University should be on teaching.

I think it should be a learning place, a discussion center for open thought, free thought, I don't think anything should be rammed down anybody's throats by anybody.

To get people to think.

Mostly to get people interested and learning, and to educate... the more you're educated, the more you're aware of a lot of things... the more you learn more, the more you know and the more you can relate and connect things.

Possibly just to produce mostly the people, the thinkers of tomorrow - the next generation of thinkers.

Service to Society and Community

Service to society in general and to the more immediate geographic community may be thought of as two aspects of a general societal service function of the University. About 40 percent of the students, especially resident men (68%) as compared to the others (33%), regarded it as a function of a University.

Nearly one-third of the students said that the University should serve as a conscience and critic of society by setting an example, perhaps by providing a heterogeneous population mix on its campus, by promoting and living up to democratic principles, and by encouraging a broader awareness of and concern about worldwide problems.

I feel also a University should be the mainstay of a democratic society or whatever you want to call it. It should be an example of how society should function. Not as they've been now, but example as they should be - idealistic.

It should be a place where there is communication between people of different backgrounds, just so people can get to know each other... a lot of times you have a lot of prejudices because you don't know what that person is really like, but you make assumptions. But if you can get to talk to that person, maybe you find out you have a lot of things in common, that they weren't that much different.

The one thing I think that college does for you is that it gives you a broad view of life. It shows you like, for instance, history shows you the whole past of mankind and you place yourself in proper perspective... you read about the peasants during the Black Plague or something in Europe or the Chinese peasantry of twenty years ago; I mean the way mankind has lived throughout all history.

One-fourth of the students said that the University should be concerned with the nearby community. This concern could be expressed by preparing students for involvement with the community, or through the University itself being involved in the community, for example by providing continuing educational services.

Well, keep the community running, I guess. It teaches the next generation how to keep a city, a country, going, really.

To be constantly young, to realize what students want, to be able to give them courses in what they need and want, to work with the community - like I have no respect for colleges who claim they're renowned in medieval Greek literature. That's outdated. The University should be for today.

Other students said that the university could serve general society by examining existing values and attitudes or by leading in initiating changes in society. Two of these students felt that keeping the University a sanctuary apart from general society would enhance this possibility of the University serving as a conscience or monitor of society.

It's the opening of their eyes to their surroundings and what needs change and what doesn't need change. And once they get out, their University undergraduate days will show them how to start these changes... I think that these are people that the University is producing to see where change is needed and help it go along.

The history of the University shows itself as being a monastary type thing. Years ago the purpose of the University was for a student to get out of the world and go into seculsion and then contemplate on his life, and now the University is becoming a vehicle for social change... It's probably a good situation with somebody who is able to be in a University - they are still protected from the outside world so that they can have the security to generate their own ideas, which is also necessary for any kind of social change.

Vocational Preparation

Some students (31%) said a function of the University was vocational preparation of its students. Usually they referred to the learning of skills in their undergraduate major, but a few saw the undergraduate degree as a required preparatory step to graduate or professional education which would more directly provide vocational skills. This function can be viewed as a practical service to both students and society as well as a dimension of personal growth and development.

I see it as a place to learn how to think and a place to learn, and I particularly see it as a place to learn a profession as such.

For most people it prepares them for some type of career. It's almost mandatory to have a diploma if you come from a middle class family, which I do.

To educate, to prepare you for a career. That's as far as it goes with me.

It's a function for me to get me a degree - a piece of paper that says I can go on... It has all kinds of other functions like socializing people so they can fit into a niche, and that's what I'm doing - trying to find a correct way to communicate so I fit right in. So keeping people out of the labor market and getting people into the labor market.

Summary

In describing what they believed to be the functions of a university, the students referred to four basic dimensions. They were, in order of frequency: personal growth and development of students, academic experience, service to society and community, and vocational preparation.

These four University functions described by SUNY/B students in 1970 are similar to the five major purposes for higher education described by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education 1972.*

Providing opportunities for growth of individual students

Advancing human capability in society at large

Enlarging educational justice for the post Secondary School age group

Transmitting and advancing learning and wisdom

Critically evaluating society for the sake of society

Student Participation in Decision-Making

Should students participate in decision making at the University? The overwhelming response of these students was "Yes!" One hundred percent said that students should have some role. However, the extent of that role and in which decision areas it should be exercised received a variety of responses.

Most interviewees discussed students' role in general decisions. In addition, a few students discussed specific decision areas which they felt ought to include more or less student input than decisions in general. The specific areas mentioned included: faculty hiring and tenure, curriculum courses and requirements, and social functions or short term decisions. Table 2.2 presents the expressed preferences for assignment of authority for decisions. Percentages in three categories: shared control, advisory role, and student control represent 100% of the students,** but any student in the student advisory role category who specified that faculty-administration should make the final decision is also listed in that category.

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*Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, The Purposes and Performance of Higher Education in the United States, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1972.

**An exception is accounted for by two students who are counted only in the Other category.

TABLE 2.2 ADVOCATED AUTHORITY FOR DECISION-MAKING AT THE UNIVERSITY

DESIRED CONTROL	% of students
General	
Shared: Faculty/Students voting roles	56
Student Advisory Role: non-voting	34
Faculty-Administration	18
Students: final decision	4
Other (Miscellaneous)	22
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	(50)
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	(55)

General Decisions

In regard to decisions in general, a majority of students said students should share actively in the decision process of the University perhaps by having the whole student body asked to express their opinions in a referendum.

Some of those who wanted shared control of decisions specified an equal student-faculty division of power. Others thought that there should be various ratios of power, that only upper level students should be included, or that more groups be represented - faculty-students-staff or other combinations; one combination included "the taxpayer."

> *I think it's great; it's their school; they're the ones who get affected by the decisions. I think it brings them closer to the jobs and their responsibilities of administration... by making decisions, you learn.*
>
> *I think it should be a distribution of power things. It should almost be like a partnership, except that the administration should be a little more powerful, but the students should be able to have a really big say in what's going on.*

This committee of five, perhaps two should be students... that ratio about describes it; three-two, that's junior or senior level students, not freshman or sophomores.

A few students perceived the administration in such a way that administrative responsibility, as they saw it, would be limited solcy to the mechanical provision of day-to-day University operations.

I don't think the administration should have anything to do with curriculum... If the students say that we want a program of such and such, then the administration should say, "Well then we'll need so much money. Maybe we can get it here, or we would have to eliminate this." They should advise the students on how to implement their educational plans, I think that should be their role.

About one-third of the students wanted to have input into the decision-making process, but did not necessarily seek an official voting role. Their emphasis was on being heard, having student opinion considered, when decisions were made. Almost one-fifth said that faculty-administration should have final control - but only after considering student input. In every case this preference was accompanied by an expressed desire for student opinion to be solicited during the decision-making process. Therefore, they are also counted in the student advisory role category of the table. The rest of the students in the advisory-role category did not specifically refer to faculty-administration control, although it was implied.

The rationale for this assignment of authority was the inexperience or impermancence of students in contrast to the experience and expertise of faculty-administration. However, students who wanted either to advise the administration or to share control with it felt that students had a unique and valuable contribution to make.

So perhaps it's not the actual voting, but perhaps it's their [student] *opinions because we are thinking people, and we have lots of ideas just because we're right there involved, that maybe the administration never ever thinks of because they* [administration] *take it for granted.*

I just don't think that there are enough interested students to result in decisions being made that the whole study body wants. I think it is very easy for one group to move in and influence decisions... I think students should be able to voice their opinions but leave it in the hands of the faculty or the administration to make the decisions.

I don't think the students have the wisdom of age, if nothing else. They haven't had the practical experience in running a department or university. Like I said, their opinions, their ideas on innovations or changes should definitely be listened to, weighed for practicality, for the ultimate end - where it could lead, things like that.

Specific Decision Areas

A number of students discussed the role of students in specific decision areas such as Faculty, Curriculum and Social/Short term decisions. The latter was discussed by only a few students. Most of those who mentioned topics like dorm regulations, uses of Norton Union, or student activities felt that students should have control of these social decisions which so intimately affected their daily lives. Very few students would even share control with faculty or administration.

With problems concerning the students themselves like whether we should give money to the football team and this sort of thing. I think the students alone should decide all these problems and what should be done with Norton Union and what type of tables should be set up in Norton and what kind of speakers we have at the University, should be entirely up to the students. I don't think the administration have any business saying anything about any of those things.

Curriculum Decisions

Just as no student specified only faculty-administration control of social decisions, neither did any specify it for decisions having to do with curricula, a few implied it when they said that students should play an advisory role regarding course work and departmental requirements. A number indicated that they wanted students to have a more active role, to vote and to share responsibility along with faculty. A few students would prefer student control of curricula decisions. In general, these students felt that courses and requirements were an area

students were very much involved with and should be able to influence.

> *In the academic, the faculty has to teach and the students have to learn - I don't want to get pinned down exactly how much - I guess fifty-fifty.*

Decisions Regarding Faculty

A number of interviewees advocated having an active role in decisions regarding faculty hiring and tenure; their emphasis was focused on student role in tenure decisions. They felt that students should be able to influence retention or dismissal of teachers on the basis of their collective classroom experiences with them as teachers. The same reasoning was expressed by those students who wanted to have their opinions heard and considered but did not expect to have a voting role on the tenure committee. A few students specified faculty control of this topic area, and students also emphasized that judgment of a potential faculty member, or of his research activities, was better done by his faculty peers than by students. Only a couple of students advocated student control of faculty hiring and tenure decisions.

> *I think the students should be allowed to evaluate the professor, but not have the final say, and only to evaluate him as far as his work and knowledge of the material goes, not as far as his political views or anything like that goes... Let's face it, the guy that went to school for eight years and has his Ph.D. and has been teaching for 10 or 12 years, isn't about to... have his job in the hands of a bunch of undergraduates. He wants people on his own level to judge him, and that's the faculty.*

Summary

When discussing student participation in decision-making at the University, all students were interested in having students play some role. Over half advocated that students should share actively in that process; most of these desired only that students play an advisory role to faculty-administration who would make the decisions. Ideally students wanted to have an opportunity to express their opinions and to be heeded; however, some of the interviewees said that they themselves were too busy or were not personally interested in getting actively involved in the decision-making process. Only two of these students favored the idea of student control of all decisions at the University.

I think there should be a nice balance between what the established group of people who are running the school think should be done and the students themselves who are going to be affected think should be done, and a good exchange of ideas is probably the most optimum condition.

Value of a College Education

"What do you see as the value of a college education for you?" Responses to this query fell generally into the broad categories of Personal Development, Academic/Intellectual Experience, Vocational Preparation, and Social Experience (Table 2.3). Students most frequently reported that the benefit of a college education for them was the opportunity it provided for personal growth and development. This objective was specified most often as the function of the University, as well as being among students' most frequently cited experiences of most value when they appraised their SUNY/B experience.* Nearly as many students referred to their academic experiences - both knowledge acquired in their coursework and opportunities for intellectual stimulation outside of classes. Over two-fifths cited vocational preparation and the greater economic rewards or more interesting jobs which they expected would result from having a college degree. Finally, about one-fifth of the students specified social experiences - both interpersonal and societal - as valuable aspects of a college education.

Personal Development

Personal development was mentioned by over two-thirds of the students. For example, 43 percent said the greatest value of a college education was the maturing and developing as a unique individual which they felt was enhanced by their University experience. Students referred to other specific ways of developing as indicated in the next three categories of the table. Nearly one-third of the students said that becoming open-minded, more objective and/or broadening one's viewpoint was a value. About as many students said that the benefit of the experience was for students to become autonomous, to discover their own identity and to establish their own values and goals. A few said that the benefit lay in the opportunity to try new experiences and to develop new interests. Two students saw the university as a safe place - a sanctuary - within which they could explore new interests and develop as individuals. All of these responses described various aspects of personal development.

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*See Table 2.1, p.10 ; and Table 5.3, p.114.

TABLE 2.3 VALUE OF A COLLEGE EDUCATION

VALUE	% of students
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	*69*
Develop, mature/become a well-rounded person	43
Become open-minded, objective/develop a broadened viewpoint	31
Become autonomous, find own identity and goals	30
Develop new interests, have new experiences	20
Develop within sanctuary of University	3
ACADEMIC/INTELLECTUAL EXPERIENCE	*59*
Learn, acquire knowledge	41
Intellectual stimulation, love of learning	13
Learn how to think	13
VOCATIONAL PREPARATION	*44*
Vocational skills or preparation for graduate/professional schools	39
Material or status benefits of degree	15
Preparation for more interesting work	8
SOCIAL EXPERIENCE	*21*
Meet people, learn from interactions with others	20
Develop awareness, heightened sensitivity to social issues	3
OTHER/MISCELLANEOUS	*10*
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	*(61)*
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	*(234)*

I think specifically it has helped me to mature a lot, really... maintaining convictions and even thinking up the convictions in the first place, taking care of myself and knowing that when you do something there are consequences and weighing the consequences, seeing if they are good consequences and do it, and if they are not good consequences don't do it. And just looking more rationally at some things - not just flip impulsively.

Take the kids away from home life and put them in a situation where they have to grow up and where they sample things without having their parents beat them over the head. My parents were very protective and college was a chance to get away and make my own decisions, and I think that was the thing that affected me most.

Just to broaden your background, just experiences; experience things around you. If you went out to work right after high school, you'd get new experiences, but by going to college and being in a different environment, I think it broadens your environment. You get many more things.

Academic/Intellectual

Academic aspects of a college education were cited as a value by nearly three-fifths of the students. Most frequently the learning or knowledge they had acquired was mentioned as a value. A few students referred to the intellectual stimulation of being in classes and among people interested in pursuing scholarship. A number said that learning how to think more critically was a value of their college education.

It's given me a good opportunity to explore certain areas of academic life, of intellectual life. I've been able to go into certain areas like Sociology. I took that up as a major, and it was very decisive in helping me grow in a certain way which I think has been pretty good. It made me aware of other people and the way they are, and then it has given me the incentive to want to grow more in other areas.

It tends to delve into things that I would normally never go into: philosophy, music and art. But it's at this level. I mean, I would delve into them naturally but not into the level I got into.

An environment, an intellectual community that allowed me to just see and do my thing.

Well, I suppose it's specific knowledge gained but I think it's more than that - learning how to think and how to examine things and not just accept them the way they are, and how to learn to examine for myself... I think it is really the whole thought process that is really the most important to me now, and also the people I've met... faculty and students, because I think that this is an atmosphere, maybe the only one, in which we really share these ideas or at least share them so intensely because we're subjected to them everyday. I feel that if I weren't here, I wouldn't have this intellectual challenge.

Vocational Preparation

Vocational preparation and skills were seen as a value by 44 percent of the students. Most frequently these students referred to their training in the particular skill of their major: engineering, teaching, etc. However, a few of them regarded the undergraduate degree as a important step in their vocational preparation because it enabled them to go on to graduate or professional school - toward their vocational goal. A few students described greater financial benefits or status that they anticipated in their future employment because they had obtained a college degree. A number of students said they expected that college education would prepare them to hold more interesting jobs than they could otherwise obtain.

To me it's just like a ticket to get into the school system to teach...the major thing about going to college is the preparing to be a teacher.

People say the primary goal of education should be to improve your mind. I don't buy that. It's purely an economical one. Not necessarily that I'll make a lot of money, more than I would working in a factory as I have been, but the type of work... I didn't come to college to get rich, to go out and get rich. I came to college so I wouldn't

[Cont'd.] *have to do what my father is doing. I'd like to go to work with a clean shirt and don't have to breathe in any dust. This was the primary goal... I just want better working conditions. That's all.*

It's an opportunity to really be prepared to get a job as challenging - and something that I would be interested in rather than a dull routine-type job.

Social Experiences

About one-fifth of the students mentioned that the social experience at the University was a benefit of their education. Most frequently they referred to meeting people and learning from their interactions and relationships; two students commented that a value of their education was an increased awareness of social issues.

Just meeting some, not millions and millions, some good people who I really learn from and I'm not talking academic learning all that much.

If I hadn't gone to college, I guess I would have been less aware of social issues. Around home you just live from day to day.

There were also a few responses too idiosyncratic to fit well into any of the general categories, but only one student was not sure that his college education had been of value to him.

I know that if I didn't go to college, I'd be married now. I'd have at least two or three kids, and I'd be miserable because that's the direction my life was taking before I went to college.

Change in Perceived Value of a College Education

The preceeding discussion reported what students saw as the value of a college education for them when they were nearing completion of their undergraduate experience. About two-thirds of the group were asked if this was a change from the value they had expected when they matriculated at SUNY/B. A majority of this group reported that their perceptions had changed; only a few said they were unchanged.

In general, those students recalled their expectations as incoming freshmen being focused on what they would be learning in their academic experiences - factual information or vocational skills. After they were actually enrolled in the University, however, they came to realize that the University environment encompassed far more than just classrooms, and that the out-of-class experiences contributed meaningfully to their personal growth and development.

> *I'd say maybe last year sometime I started thinking differently and looking at things a little differently and I realized that I had gained something, and it really wasn't out of books that much.*

> *I think it is a growing experience. Academics maybe 40 percent. I don't know where I got that figure. It just hit me that there should be less than half because I think it would be worth it. I would have grown up just as much in a college environment without any academics.*

Summary

These interviewees saw the University experience as one which enhanced their personal growth by affording them opportunities to build a personal identity through establishing their own values and goals, by developing and broadening their intellectual interests and vocational skills and by providing opportunities for social interactions.

University Atmosphere

As might be expected in a large University with over twenty thousand students, and campuses in several locations, interviewees' descriptions of the University atmosphere were many and varied. A number of students reported the "feeling" of the campus, i.e., free, liberal, impersonal, chaotic, tense. The reader should keep in mind that in Spring 1970, SUNY/B was the scene of violent demonstrations, and the campus was patrolled by Buffalo policemen for part of the semester. However, the disruptions are less prominent in the interviewees' description of atmosphere in the fourth year than the less violent but more extended demonstrations, teach-ins, etc., which occurred in Spring 1969 were in the third year interviews.*

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*Ryba, Gary *What Can We Learn From It?* University Research, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1969.

In addition to descriptive adjectives which summarized the "feeling" on campus, descriptions of students - their political activism or lack of interest, their appearance, their friendliness, their scholarship or lack of interest - were the means most frequently chosen to describe the atmosphere of the university. There seemed to be an implicit assumption that a description of the current student population, its activities and concerns would be descriptive of atmosphere because it is the current student population which generates the atmosphere of this University.

Although students described their personal impressions of the atmosphere, the responses were not couched in personal terms. The responses fell into only two of the broad dimensions: social and academic. To indicate the emphasis of the students' descriptions, the academic dimension is subdivided into university: liberalism and diversity, which is the major component of their descriptions of the University milieu, and academic (intellectual) cited by only a few students. The categories are presented in Table 2.4 in order of the frequency with which they were reported.*

Liberalism and Diversity

Two-thirds of the students described characteristics of liberalism and diversity which they found at SUNY/B. They reported an emphasis on individual freedom - freedom to be oneself, freedom to express ideas and opinions. The freedom and liberalism provided a setting which encouraged questioning of ideas and opinions and promoted political awareness. Further, the reported liberalism and openness was enhanced by the variety of different people and the diversity of opinions and ideas and activities on campus.

From the various perceptions of these students a portrait emerges of the University as open, liberal, exciting, tense, chaotic - encompassing a variety of people and ideas, bubbling with political awareness at varying levels of involvement ranging from violence and radical militance to pockets of apathy.

One-third of the students characterized the atmosphere as liberal, free, and open. For them, the university was a place where students were given much freedom; they were not only allowed but also frequently encouraged to question, to express their opinions, to participate in an interchange of ideas, and to guide their own lives. There was room within the campus community for diversity of people, ideas, values, and behavior. Acknowledgement of responsibility for oneself, and acceptance of others, particularly their differences, seemed to be the prevailing attitude.

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*These same categories are used to present students' reactions to the effect of the University environment on their maturing, Table 2.5.

TABLE 2.4 DESCRIPTIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY ATMOSPHERE

CHARACTERISTICS	% of students	% of students
University: Liberalism and Diversity		*67*
Free/liberal/open/interchange of ideas/ questioning/wide variety of people, ideas	33	
Increasingly radical, militant/student demonstrations/frightening/disruptive, violent tactics	18	
Politically involved, aware	15	
Filthy, dirty/drug-oriented/less conservative/ nonconforming	13	
Active, exciting, vital/lots going on/progressive, changing/varied cultural activities	10	
Chaotic/tense/torrid/restless	10	
Politically apathetic/reactionary, growing "silent majority"	3	
Unrealistic/different from outside world	2	
Social Aspects		*48*
Divided students/set groups and cliques/ polarized	27	
Cold, impersonal/unfriendly/indifferent toward others/too large/phony	18	
Relaxed/informal/friendly/cooperative	17	
Balanced between social and academic aspects/ social orientation/good spirit at athletic events	10	
Apathetic/lacks group spirit, tradition	10	
Academic Aspects		*17*
Non-scholastic, unintellectual/disinterested students/decay, stagnation/student-faculty ratio too large	15	
Interested students/intellectually challenging/ conducive to learning	5	
Inadequate vocational preparation opportunities	2	
Can't Describe Atmosphere		*3*
NUMBER OF STUDENTS		*(60)*
NUMBER OF RESPONSES		*(138)*

It is still the kind of university where you could be anyone or anything and fit in... Like people you have known over the past four years that are so entirely different than you, and they are very happy here, too. It is a very free kind of university. You can be anyone or have any identity. You can be very happy and fit in easily.

You are allowed to do just about anything you want to and to be what you are, to be what you want to be.

It's very liberal... You can do what you want to do, pretty much.

In a related group of responses, a few students described the variety not only of people and ideas but also of activities to be found on campus. They described the University as an active, vital, exciting, and creative place to be. There were numerous activities and new experiences in which to participate; particular mention was made of the cultural events and the emphasis on the arts, such as concerts and art exhibits. Also, exciting changes appeared to be taking place within the University including a re-evaluation of the school's goals and a concurrent search for an identity for the school.

There's a lot of different things you can find to do here. There's so many different things you can go into and so many varied activities and things.

Other responses within the category of liberalism and diversity had to do with levels of political awareness and activity found among the students of the University. In particular, almost one-fifth of the students perceived an increase in militancy and political radicalism on campus; student demonstrations were now more likely to employ disruptive or violent tactics than in the past. Students used terms such as frightening, hostile, repressive, and revolutionary to describe the atmosphere at SUNY/B. Distrust between different groups on campus was prevalent. Students' reactions to this type of atmosphere varied. Some said that political demonstrations made people think about the issues and increased their involvement; others disagreed with the demonstrators' tactics but not necessarily their position on the issues; still others felt that certain students would protest any issue solely to receive attention.

There seems like there's more radicals now. There's a lot more demonstrations.

It has gone to a matter of hostility and distrust. I don't think the student body trusts the administration, and the administration doesn't trust the student body, and the faculty is somewhere in the middle, half trusting, half not trusting... I feel that right now this University is a distrustful, repressive, revolution type atmosphere.

A couple of times I remember like last semester, the medical school controversy, people would come running and chanting through the hallways screaming and disrupting the classes and that, and that got me mad because I thought that they had no right to do that sort of thing because it was infringing on what we were trying to do.

A number of students reacted more positively and said that an awareness of the various political issues and social problems was a major aspect of the atmosphere, that students and the University community as a whole expressed concern for and participated in policital affairs on all levels: local, national, and international. In fact, as one student pointed out, most problems which existed in an urban society could be found on campus, e.g., overpopulation, cultural differences, and racial issues. However, to some, the political activism on campus seemed to result in the University's estrangement from the surrounding community.

I think the University itself has become much more involved with issues outside of its own little campus. It seems much more involved in the community and with national politics, etcetera, etcetera, larger issues.

I think the kids here are more involved...with things that are going on in the community and in the world. The problems in Buffalo and the war and aspects like that.

Only two students mentioned an absence of political awareness. These referred to political apathy, to growing "silent majority" and reactionary factions on campus.

Not all students reacted positively to the use that had been made of the freedom and liberalism of University atmosphere. A number characterized the campus as too drug-oriented, less conservative, more unconventional in dress and behavior. The campus, particularly Norton Union and students in general, but especially the "hippies," were described as filthy and dirty.

Everything is so grubby, dirty, and the people just lay around all over the place, and they're worse than what I've ever seen.

On the outside everything looks dirty. There are signs all over Norton because I walked in there and it's not a place where I think I could learn anymore... All these kids just laying around and the clothes they wear. They are all faded jeans, the beards, and the long hair...

Oh, the campus has absolutely freaked out... It's too drug-oriented and, too, everybody is trying to out-do everybody else in how unusual they can be and how liberated.

And for a few students, the atmosphere was characterized by feelings of chaos, restlessness, and tension, although there was a superficial calmness at times.

There's a restlessness... there are certain things that seem to be pressing. I guess it's because so many people are under pressure from draft, and there's a war going on and these minority groups are under another kind of pressure... depending on external events you see one exploding or you see one restlessness exploding. And then everybody can relax for a while.

In addition two students described the atmosphere as unrealistically different from the world outside of the University community.

It's sort of like a "never-never land." That's the only way to describe it. No adults... to tell you what to do if you are wrong... It seems like a paradise, you know, an unrealistic paradise is what it is.

Social Aspects

More students reported a lack of community spirit than its presence. Specifically, more than one-fourth of the students mentioned divisions or polarizations among the members of the University community, these divisions were based on various factors such as residential status and political philosophies. As a result, cliques or fixed groups predominated, and were usually indifferent or antagonistic towards each other. Little social interaction occurred among students in general or betwen the different groups; individuals and groups were primarily concerned with their own particular interests and preferred to go their own way.

People are interested in their own cliques and that's about it.

Not everybody is together; everybody is doing their own thing, they're all split in so many directions.

For almost one-fifth, the atmosphere was cold, impersonal, and unfriendly. They attributed this characteristic, at least in part, to the large size of the University and to the phoniness of the students, i.e., they preach love and brotherhood but behave in other ways and exhibit a lack of respect for other people.

There's definitely a less friendly atmosphere than when I started. It's like people are regressing and they are going back into themselves.

Cold. Outside as well as inside. It's getting so big here... I felt that I'm just a very small part of what's going on now... I feel secure in it any how; it doesn't bother me.

Those students who did find a sense of community felt that there was a cocperative spirit and cohesiveness among the students. To them, the atmosphere on campus was friendly, relaxed, and informal.

Very friendly... It's a very friendly atmosphere and most of the students are willing to help each other out.

A number of students cited features indicative of a social orientation on campus, as exemplified by the good school spirit at athletic events. However, the emphasis on the social aspects was not to the exclusion of academic pursuits; they thought there was a good balance between both aspects of campus life.

It's more or less among the studious joviality or something like that, where you do your work and you still have a good time.

It's a regular Ivy League type school. It's sports-oriented and beer blasts and all that.

However, as many students described student apathy on campus, as exemplified by the lack of tradition, group spirit, and concern for the school. Students were described as having little feeling for the University and were just waiting for the end of the school year or for graduation.

I think there was more solidarity when I first came in. There's more apathy now. Kids don't really care one way or the other what happens while they are on campus.

Academic/Scholarly Aspects

Few students described the atmosphere at SUNY/B in terms of scholarship. Those who did said that the atmosphere was unintellectual, that academically, it was decaying and stagnating, that the ratio of students to faculty was too large, and that students were not interested in academic pursuits, and some used the University as an escape from the draft. They could stay in school with a minimum of effort in their courses, especially since the implementation of the satisfactory-unsatisfactory grading system. These students felt that the University no longer deserved its reputation for academic excellence because it was too easy for students to achieve good grades, and prominent faculty members had already begun to leave for other institutions.

The atmosphere here is sickeningly unintellectual. I mean, it was bad when I came - it's worse now... What I'm saying is there's so many easy ways to get out... What really bugs me is the whole disdain of learning, even a hatred for learning you can sense here.

I think this school is very overrated. People come here, and it's so easy to do well.

Conversely, a few reported an emphasis on scholarship, sometimes in specified parts of the campus, for example, at Ridge Lea or within the Engineering Building. These students found the atmosphere to be conducive to learning. They enjoyed the intellectual challenge presented by their course work and their own and other students' interest in learning.

I think the intellectual atmosphere is one of challenge and one of a constant search and a re-evaluation instead of just a mere acceptance.

Summary

Although a couple of students reported themselves unable to describe the atmosphere of the University, most students gave a variety of responses in their efforts to describe the University as they saw it. The predominant focus of the descriptions was on the liberalism and diversity

to be found on campus. Although students' reactions were predominantly positive to these aspects, there were comments that the personal freedom and openness of expression were sometimes abused.

Nearly one-half of the students described aspects of the atmosphere, but a majority of these reported the absence of a community spirit. Only a few students dealt with academic aspects of the atmosphere.

In general, the University was described in terms of the attitudes and activities of its current student population. For these students the diversity of opinions and people interacting in an atmosphere of personal freedom made the University an exciting and vital place to be.

University Environment and Student Maturity

Students who were still enrolled at SUNY/B were asked whether they found the University environment to be conducive to their maturing. Most (89%) responded affirmatively; only two said that the environment was not, at least in some way, conducive to their maturing, and 8 percent were unsure of the effect of the environment on student maturity.

Any appraisal of characteristics of the University environment which relate to individual maturity fall, of course, within the definition of the personal development dimension. Notwithstanding, the characteristics which were cited as conducive to maturing were spread across all three of the major dimensions. In order to maintain their compatibility to descriptions of atmosphere (Table 2.4), and to represent the major emphasis of student responses, the academic dimension is again divided into its two aspects: University: liberalism and diversity and academic.

The characteristics of the University environment which students mentioned as having a positive effect on their maturing were not only diverse but often reflected various definitions of maturity. A few of those students who felt that the college experience was conducive to their maturing added that they also found other situations which were not directly related to the University, to be maturing such as off-campus employment. A few others remarked that any environment in which they had spent ages 17-21 would be maturing.

Liberalism and Diversity

A majority of students cited features which were representative of the liberalism and diversity of the University environment (Table 2.5). Specifically, more than one-third felt that the variety of ideas, people, and activities to which they were exposed facilitated their maturing. They welcomed the opportunity to exchange ideas, to examine different points of view, and to participate in new and different activities. Frequently they described themselves as more liberal and open-minded, more aware, with wider interests and involvements.

TABLE 2.5 ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE UNIVERSITY RELATED TO MATURING

CHARACTERISTICS	% of students
ENVIRONMENT IS CONDUCIVE TO MATURING	*87*
CONDUCIVE IN SOMEWAYS; NOT CONDUCIVE IN OTHERS	*2*
ENVIRONMENT IS NOT CONDUCIVE TO MATURING	*3*
DON'T KNOW	*8*

CHARACTERISTICS CONDUCIVE TO MATURING		
University: Liberalism and Diversity		*52*
Exposure to numerous and diverse people, ideas, activities/exchange of ideas	35	
Freedom to decide own views, values/to develop any way you choose	13	
Experiences in general/total environment/ constant flux	12	
Personal Responsibility		*40*
Being on my own/away from home/opportunity to make decisions/learn to cope with different situations/develop self-control and confidence		
Social Experiences		*25*
Friendships/interacting with others/living with others/learning about people		
Academic Aspects		*18*
Learning/classes/opportunity to broaden knowledge/being in academic community	15	
Job preparation/career decisions	5	
Cannot specify conducive characteristics	*3*	

(Cont'd. on next page)

TABLE 2.5 ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE UNIVERSITY RELATED TO MATURING (Cont'd.)

CHARACTERISTICS	% of students
CHARACTERISTICS NOT CONDUCIVE TO MATURING	
Social Experience	5
University does not foster sense of community/ lacks humanitarian goals/less conducive for commuters/association with immature group of people not conducive	
Personal Responsibility	3
Gain more from working/work provides challenging opportunities	
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	*(60)*
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	*(119)*

If anything, it's given me the chance to experience unlimited number of things and that I wouldn't have experienced if I wasn't here. It's got me involved in things... It's widened my interests in just social affairs or social and cultural changes. Just society as a whole - how it's changing. It's made me more aware of just many, many more things.

There are a lot of things going on, and there are a lot of places to hang around and meet people, and it's certainly nice to meet people different from you... You possibly mature just by knowing other different kinds of people... You get a chance to talk to other people and hear some of their views.

Related comments, given by a number of students described the University environment as one in which students not only had personal freedom and lack of restrictions, also one which actively encouraged students to form their own views and opinions, to determine their values, and to develop in their own particular way and, in general, to attain a better understanding of themselves.

You can do anything you want, and it depends on the individual... If he makes the right decision, he can mature in this type of an atmosphere, I think.

My views have changed since you've gotten more viewpoints... taking a little bit of what everybody says, because there are so many different points of view at this school and you come to form your own view.

It's also made me delve very deeply into my own personality and my own makeup and try to understand me.

There are a lot of challenges to one's personality to give someone a chance to develop in any way they want.

In addition, a number of students explained that everything in the environment - the total experience - contributed to their maturing. Just being at the University, and in the constant flux of this environment was helpful to them.

Personal Responsibility

Some of the students cited opportunities available at the University which encouraged them to accept personal responsibility. Most of these students said that being away from home and on their own, making their own decisions, and providing for their own immediate needs contributed to their sense of self-confidence, competence, and independence, features which they considered components of maturity.

I'm very much on my own and I have to decide a lot of things by myself.

Individually I was definitely given more responsibility than I was previously, before I got there. You have more responsibility and you have to rely on yourself.

Living in an apartment and going to a big school like this, it's quite a bit of freedom. And plus a few decisions of your own on a day-to-day basis. You make them and you get feedback, and you find out how well it turned out and that's the way you mature, I think. You do things and you learn from what you do.

I'm not as afraid of as many things in life as I was before. I mean I'm not afraid of big cities or I'm not afraid of professors or people, my superiors... I think it has helped my confidence a lot really coming here.

Social Experience

One-fourth of the students remarked that social experiences were important factors in their maturing. Their comments described meeting people, establishing friendships and other relationships, interacting and/or living with other people. They considered learning to understand and to accept others, and being able to get along with different types of people as important aspects of their maturing which had been facilitated by the many types of people to be found within the University environment.

I think just knowing people and being associated with them and learning to accept them is part of maturing.

It's again, meeting up with good people and getting a lot from them and also giving.

...with the different personalities, the people, and learning to get along with them.

Academic Aspects

Academic aspects were mentioned as a maturing influence by almost one-fifth of the students. Learning in general - classes, contacts with faculty, and opportunities to increase their knowledge, were among the features of the University environment which these students mentioned as beneficial. A few students said that choosing and preparing for a career proved helpful.

Intellectually it's been maturing... I've been learning things and starting to be aware of the boundaries of my field.

And then again there was a lot of opportunities to broaden my knowledge, such as taking courses that were not definitely related to my major, things like Music History.

Just learning so many things, in and out of the classroom, about the world and other people.

Only 5 percent of the students said that the college experience was conducive to maturing without being able to specify any particular environmental characteristics which facilitated such maturing.

Characteristics Not Conducive to Maturing

Although a few students reported themselves unable to decide whether the University atmosphere was conducive to maturing, only two students described it as an environment which in no way facilitated their maturing. One other student also reported characteristics of the environment which were not conducive to maturing, as well as some which were. The impediments to maturing were seen as lack of a set of humanitarian university goals and inadequate opportunities for people to come together and develop a sense of community.

It really hasn't had that much effect on me because I've been a commuter... It's like kind of an extension of high school, and I think it's too bad that kids have to commute. I think it's good for everybody to get away, and then you're in the life in the fullest. I mean, you're so involved in the whole university like that.

Employment situations were contrasted with the University by a few students and said to be more challenging and conducive to a person's developing personal responsibility and self-confidence.

Summary

Most students found the University environment to be conducive to their maturing. In particular they referred to independence and assuming responsibility for themselves, the exposure to many different people and ideas, social interaction and relationships with other people, and the availability of learning opportunities on campus both in and out of class.

Changes in the University

The years that most of these students attended college (1966-70) covered a period of considerable change in higher education nationally and also at this University. SUNY/B was reorganized into a administrative structure with seven Faculties; academic rules were revised; curriculum revisions instituted, and the role of *en loco parentis* ended. These many changes were concurrent with an increase in student political activism and campus restiveness also occurring at both the national and local levels.

What were these students' perceptions of the differences in the University environment during the four years they were attending SUNY/B? This question elicited many responses and most students reported a variety of changes. They discussed differences in types of students and activities, the increased liberalism of the campus both in regard to personal freedom and to academic reform, and some just reported that the campus had change in many ways since they first arrived. (Table 2.6)

Different Type of Student Interests

Nearly three-fourths of these students described a difference in the type of student interests found at the University. Specifically, the most frequently reported difference was a change in the typical student on the SUNY/B campus. A majority of residents (57%), but only a few commuters (12%), reported a noticeable change from the collegiate, fraternity-oriented student to the hippie, drug culture-oriented student as the campus role model. Many noted the difference in the appearance of students and in the establishment of a standard student costume of jeans and long hair.

A number of students commented that fraternities, which had been very important in their freshman year, had pretty well disappeared by their junior year.

> *There's been a change, it seems, in the type of student that comes here. Their appearance, first of all, has changed. When I came in and I imagine the years right before I came in, fraternities were the big thing, and boys were going around with their loafers and black socks and hair very nice - the college-Joe type people, people who for the most part belonged to fraternities because it gave them identity. Now fraternities aren't the big thing any more. Now it's hair and the messy clothes and the pot and everything else,*

TABLE 2.6 CHANGES IN THE UNIVERSITY

CHANGE		% of students
Different Type of Student Interests		*72*
Less collegiate, more drug-oriented culture	32	
Increased awareness of general political issues	30	
Increased student involvement and activity on campus issues	26	
Dirty and unpleasant Student Union/ fewer social activities on campus/ spectre of student violence	16	
More Liberal Campus		*48*
More liberal campus	23	
Curriculum revisions: departmental and general	21	
Changed administrative policies: drop and add, registration	15	
Colleges and experimental or Bulletin Board courses/dropping ROTC	10	
Coed dorms, alcohol on campus	10	
Miscellaneous		*21*
Many changes	11	
Two presidents since 1966	5	
Bigger/newer campus	5	
Other	5	
Not aware of general changes - only academic changes	10	
NUMBER OF STUDENTS		*(61)*
NUMBER OF RESPONSES		*(150)*

[Cont'd.] and these people are pseudo-hippies most of them. It's a contest who could wear the most way-out clothing, who could look the dirtiest, and it's just the way they go about it has changed, but it is for the same things.

When I came up here, there was still largely a fraternity culture, Saturday nights dates, certain modes of dress. It's different from the hippie-freak-drug culture you have now. In other words it just seems more interesting to be here now. Not that there still aren't dress modes and there's just another culture substitute for the original one, and this one seems more interesting, less uptight.

The second most frequently reported difference, noted by all groups, described a different kind of involvement and activities for SUNY/B students. Interviewees referred to the increased political awareness and activity of students in general. Political issues, both as manifested on this campus (ROTC, Themis) and off campus on the national scene (Vietnam War), were of apparent concern to a greater number of students than in earlier years.

A number of politically concerned students on campus called for and engaged in radical tactics and actions in response to the issues, but a few of the interviewees commented that they did not regard the radical group as representative of the students as a whole, although they thought most students were interested in change.

The political feeling of the campus, the reputation of the school - it is now known as the Berkeley of the East... I don't like being grabbed every five minutes for, "Will you contribute to this; will you contribute to that." And when you say no, you get dirty looks and words under their breath. I don't like the feeling that "they" - I don't know who they are but it's a group of people. "They" want to do something so what they're doing is right for everybody... These people are preaching "Change the world, change you ideas." But if your ideas are different than theirs and you're thinking for yourself, you're wrong. And so they're being very hypocritical. I feel, anyway, so I just don't like the mood on campus.

I say drugs really have had a strong influence plus just the general reform movement around the country. Radicalism has changed the university a lot. The vote is not the main activity on campus anymore; it's revolution. So there's another thing, and they're very closely connected, the drugs and revolution. Because when you smoke drugs it puts you immediately in an anti-government. You are already an anti-government because you are a criminal. You are an outlaw. You are subject to arrest, and paranoia is the big thing around this University. It's probably the most common emotional mental state next to being stoned. Everyone is super-paranoid and they are paranoid against this creeping government and that's what starts you off, I think.

But I really can't go along with the students who want to violently pull down the college - a punishment for the officials for not changing it - because I can't see how they could possibly represent the voice of the students. The average student does want changes, but he does want to get an education foremost. Like closing down the college, you're not hurting anyone but the students.

In addition, nearly as many reported increased student involvement in campus policy and decision making, which included departmental and curriculum revisions, faculty tenure, and other University issues which concerned students on this campus. This increased student involvement was reported by about one-quarter of the students, more often by men (38%) than women (5%).

I see the student body being more vocal in how the University itself is going to affect them. They're realizing that they have a say in what is going to happen to them. They feel that they should have a say in what's going on and that seems to be the trend in the University system, where students are making demands.

The students refuse to be pushed around anymore and told what to do, and this is happening whether it is by parents, whether it is by clergy, by the government and by the administration here. It's our school. It's my school.

A few students commented on the change in Norton Student Union and student activities which occurred during their college years. The differences, all described as negative, were seen as part and parcel of the change in the dominant life style on campus. These students used Norton Union as an example to typify the changed mode of dress and behavior on campus. A few students, all residents, noted a lessening of interest in organized student activities on campus.

> *I can't stand walking through Norton Union. There's too many people and that, and the place is so filthy, like there's people sitting all over the place. You walk downstairs during the day and it's just impossible to get through. I don't know, it's just everyone seems so phony and a lot of the people there. I just don't like the Union at all; I don't know - school has changed a lot.*

> *Now everybody is off campus. Norton Union can be dead at night. Before, everybody used to be around. People are just homebodies now. They just keep to themselves, and you don't see anybody anymore, and it's a whole different atmosphere here. They come to school, they go to classes, and they leave.*

More Liberal Campus

Nearly half the students described some way in which they felt this campus had become more liberal. They commented about the relaxation of dorm visitation and alcoholic beverage rules, and also about academic changes which resulted in more flexible rules and requirements.

> *So much more liberal about having open dorm open hours, which there wasn't when I was a freshman. The liquor policy on campus, the basic and distribution requirements, the relevant courses and the student demands... when I was a freshman there was a policy set; there was no way of getting out of it. Once you took a course you couldn't drop it, but now you can drop it up to the end of classes which is tremendous. Just the whole liberal atmosphere of the school.*

> *When I first lived in Allenhurst, if a University coed was seen, caught on Allenhurst block, she was liable to be suspended. Now girls are living there. There was no open house in Allenhurst, no liquor, no anything. It was Puritan Society - no*

[Cont'd.] *sin - no sin on Allenhurst block. If you were a freak, then you were a freak. I mean people would sort of look at you as you walk by. If you had long hair and a beard, you were a freak. People would go "Wow, what a freak!" If you smoked marijuana you were a pothead. You were something distinguished from most everybody else. The one kid in my Allenhurst court who was starting to experiment with drugs was totally scorned. He was almost busted. He was told to leave, to go home to NYC or he would be arrested probably. It's totally changed.*

Academic changes cited as examples of how this campus had become more liberal were reported in several specific categories: curriculum revisions (21%), changed administrative policies for registration, drop and add, etc. (15%), Colleges, experimental and Bulletin Board courses (10%).*

It seemed to be much more rigid, academically especially. It didn't offer the same things it offers now, whether they are good or bad. It has expanded tremendously. More specifically there's a lot of courses now that weren't offered before.

Well, there's the College A thing and the new campus, and I think the college as a whole has become a little more free... everything is changing so fast right now. The requirements, what you have to take and everything... I think that the individual departments are realizing that the students - they want education that they feel is important to them. I mean the courses that they want to take.

Miscellaneous Changes

A few students described general differences or reported that there had been changes without specifying them. Among the miscellaneous differences mentioned by only a few students were the growth of the University - either in size and population or in reference to the development of the new campus and the succession or changeover in the University presidency.

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*For student reaction to three specific academic changes: four course load, S/U grading and B & D revisions see Chapter 3.

I think the changes have been interesting. I find it hard to come up with an intelligent comment on them. But changes in general, because the changes have been so varied.

Just the size of the University... like the expansion onto the Ridge Lea Campus.

When I sat in my freshman convocation, President Meyerson addressing us, took of his mortar board and put on a freshman beanie, and he said something like, "Welcome fellow freshmen." It was his first year... As a matter of fact now, President Meyerson didn't even make it as far as his fellow freshmen have made it.

Summary

Almost all student were aware of a variety of changes in the University since they had arrived as freshmen in 1966. Most frequently they described ways in which students at SUNY/B were different - in dress, living style, and activities - especially political awareness and involvement, and concern and involvement with the policies of their own University. They also reported changes in academic and social regulations of the University which had transformed a formerly rigid academic structure to one of considerable flexibility, and had ceased trying to legislate morality by doing away with most dormitory regulations as well as permitting the use of alcohol on campus. Many examples of particular issues or changes were cited and discussed as these students sorted through the changes they perceived as they were getting ready to leave a campus different from the one they had entered four years earlier.

There's a generation gap between the senior class and the freshman class. There's such a difference in opinions and values. Maybe they'll change by the time they've gotten through four years of school, too, but I have a feeling that they'll never be what we are now. And you see so many strangely dressed people around here, and I think also that the values have changed a great deal, too, around here. That there's so much talk about free love, and drugs are so prevelant, and people just - In a sense they do care about others, but I think in a greater sense they don't.

[Cont'd.] *They're more interested in doing their own thing, and they go out for classes in a very - I don't know how to put it. Like they get all excited about it for a couple days or a few months and then all of a sudden it's dropped and they turn to something else, and they never see anything through anymore. And I don't know if we ever did that. I feel like I'm talking like an old lady, but I can see a lot of differences since I've been here.*

Chapter Summary

In order of frequency, students saw the *functions* of a University as personal growth and development of students, academic/intellectual experiences, service to society and community, and vocational preparation. It would seem that they were personally able to utilize these functions because they reported that the *values of a college education* for them were personal development, academic/intellectual experiences, vocational preparation, and social experiences.

Every interviewee was interested in students having some role in *decision making at the University*. Many wanted an active role; others wanted students to have an advisory role in decision-making at the University.

In describing the *University atmosphere* students most frequently said it was free, liberal and open, and second most frequently described divisions among students which inhibited their interaction and resulted in set groups and cliques.

Students regarded the *University environment* as conducive to their maturing especially because of the many opportunities to exercise individual responsibility and freedom of choice and also because of the diversity of ideas and people with which to interact and test one's own ideas and values.

Reported *changes in the University* during the time these students attended included a less collegiate more drug-culture oriented student body, greater student interest and awareness of political issues, greater involvement of students in campus issues, and a more liberal campus in terms of academic and curriculum reforms as well as in dorm and alcohol regulations and policies.

CHAPTER III

THE ACADEMIC LIFE

Students' descriptions of their academic lives provide information about a major dimension of the environment at the University. Students approach academic aspects of the University with varying goals in mind, seeking and rejecting experiences as they relate to these goals which are also subject to change between freshman and later years.

In the fourth year interviews, several facets of the academic area were explored including students' opinions about changes in academic policies of the University, their reaction to academic competition, to their courses and choice of major, as well as their opinions of faculty and relationships with faculty.

This group of students began their studies under one set of academic policies and lived through changes which affected grading regulations, standard course load and curricula, including both general requirements and departmental program changes. Their reports of their academic experiences are affected by the extra confusion which arose from living through such changes.

Opinions of Academic Changes

Three specific academic changes were instituted in fall 1969, the fourth year of these students' University experience. They included a shift from a standard academic load of five three-hour courses to four four-hour courses, the option to elect Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading for up to one-fourth of a student's coursework, and modification of the basic and distribution requirements previously required of all students by the Division of Undergraduate Studies. The new Distribution Requirements are based on a division of courses into three main areas of study: Humanities, Science and Technology, and Social Sciences. Students now need to complete a minimum of 24 hours in the two main areas outside their own field of concentration and fulfill the requirements of their own major department. In this way, one of the three areas can be avoided altogether if desired.

TABLE 3.1 OPINION OF ACADEMIC CHANGES

REACTIONS	% of students
Four Course Load	
Positive comments only	73
Negative comments only	12
Both positive and negative comments	8
Neutral - change is not significantly different	7
Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory Grading	
Positive comments only	59
Positive comments but concern with graduate school acceptance	20
Negative comments only	10
Both positive and negative comments	10
Basic & Distribution Requirements Modification	
Positive comments only	65
Negative comments only	13
Both positive and negative comments	8
Neutral, not aware, not affected	13
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	(60)
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	(260)

During their third year, these students had expressed their reactions to these changes as proposals under discussion. Reaction then was generally favorable.* In this interview they were asked to react to the changes as instituted. Not all students reported personal experience with all three academic changes. Nearly all were affected by the four course load; some had tried S/U grading in one or more courses, but because many were so near graduation, very few of them were aware of exactly what the basic and distribution (B&D) modifications involved.

*Rott, M., *The University Experience, the third year*, University Research, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1972.

In general the changes were received favorably (Table 3.1). These students were most positive about the four course load; nearly twice as many reacted favorably to this change in practice as had anticipated a favorable response when it was proposed (73% 1970, 36% 1969). Nearly two-thirds of these students favored the B&D modifications. Fewer students were completely positive in their reactions to S/U grading than had anticipated being so (59% 1970, 68% 1969); however, another 20 percent expressed personally favorable reactions although they had some reservations about how graduate schools would react to S's on a student record.

Four Course Load

Favorable comments about the change from a five course load to four course load tended to stress the beneficial effect on the student - that his or her workload would be easier because of having fewer subjects about which to be concerned. Students reported feeling less pressure and having extra time either to concentrate in depth on the four subjects or to pursue other interests.

> *I think it's great, I really do. It was started this year and of course I can't take advantage of it. But I've always found since freshman year that there was always one course that was just pushed under. I never had time for it and one course always suffered.*

> *Five courses is too much. The four course load, especially if you want to do the work, it really gives you an opportunity of intensifying. That really helped.*

> *Nobody can carry five courses a semester for four years that they really like. So you find people taking garbage courses... It's filler; there's so much filler in your work load. The big game on drop and add day, "Hey, got a good course?" "Yeah, all A's, we heard he gave all A's last semester." ...it's become a joke already and the four course load eliminates that... You probably have more quality control over your education.*

I don't think there's any reduction in work at all, definitely. When I heard about it I was under the impression that this was to reduce the workload so that the students could put more into each individual course, but I've come to realize that it was to increase the workload in each course, to make the student perform, which is not as good as I originally thought, but it's still better than the five course system, because I find it easier to do - or anyway more satisfying and easier for that reason - to do a better job on fewer things than a not so good job on a lot of things.

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory Grading Option

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading for a portion of the student's work was received favorably by a majority of interviewees. They recommended S/U for non-major courses, for exploratory courses, for a reduced workload in one course, or to keep a low mark from adversely affecting a student's average.

I think it's good if you want to save your cum. [cumulative GPA] Like I took Acting on pass/fail because I had to make the Dean's List once more. I just had to and I knew I was going to get a C in that; so I figured if I took it pass/fail, then they don't average it in.

I think it allows for much more flexibility than was available to the student before. And I think it allows him to search other areas that he might not have been able to before because he was afraid of a bad mark and because this can lower his whole average and affect his whole future, and I think it allows him to delve into these new areas, and it gives him more opportunities.

There are some courses you may want to take and not do that much work for - just out of curiosity and a passing interest. The S/U system allows you to take them without fear of failure in the course or a D or C. I think it's a good thing. I definitely wouldn't suggest it for all courses.

Other students, almost one-third, made both positive and negative comments. For most of these students their only reservation was the possible unfavorable reactions of graduate schools to S/U grading on an applicant's record.

Others thought that S/U might have deleterious results for certain students, freshmen, for example. A few students reacted negatively to the whole idea of S/U grading.

> *The problem is if you want to go on to grad school. So I wouldn't recommend that you take them in your major. So it's in a sense that it's good that our school is that liberal, but it's hard when other schools aren't.*
>
> *I think it's good except they shouldn't allow it in freshman year because the attitude that freshmen - to them college is easier than high school... I think that's making it a little bit too easy to start out with. Like you don't have any respect for what you are going to be going through.*
>
> *I don't think the student is going to learn much that way. There would be no reason to try because why should you try that hard? You know you are going to make a "satisfactory" without having to do anything. It's just like you take the course, like you take five courses and you take one of them satisfactory, and you can just study for all the other four and just get a satisfactory in that, and that's it.*

A few students discussed written evaluation as a possible alternative method of grading, and most of those who did thought it would be a good idea, although they felt the large size of classes would limit the possibility of a professor knowing a student well enough to write a meaningful evaluation.

Basic and Distribution Requirements Modification

The change from B&D requirements usually had to be explained to the interviewees before they could react to it. Most of them had fulfilled the previous set of requirements a year or more earlier, so their reactions, generally favorable, usually related to its effect on new SUNY/B students. Most of the students who made positive comments said the modification increased individual freedom of choice, a principle they valued highly and were glad to see extended.

It's kind of hard for me to say because I went through the old system. But I think that this will allow a lot more flexibility too. And I think this is good because some of the courses I took just because I had to take them.

For the new student he has a great advantage, he can take a lot more electives, a lot more courses that he's interested in. It's good now.

It's a dangerous logic. "We know what's good for you." It's that type of logic which I would rather suffer my own mistakes than suffer somebody else's. So I think it's much better that they've been loosened, let's say.

It allows more freedom to the student, and it's reason enough for it, I think.

For two students, the relaxation of B&D requirements meant that their procrastination in fulfilling requirements they dreaded or disliked had paid off; they no longer had to meet their original set of requirements.

I love them simply because they saved my life. I wouldn't be graduating probably. For one thing I held out on taking math for a long time and that used to be a requirement... Here I am going through three years of school and everybody else has got their math and science in, but then they changed them around, and I was lucky because like people were made at me because I got away. That was pure luck. But I am really glad they just dropped that.

Because the changes were usually not personally meaningful, a few students did not express an opinion. A few expressed a negative one on the grounds that the benefits of a well-rounded, liberal education were being lost, or that freshmen needed structure and guidance to insure their exploration of a variety of subject areas. A few students would have preferred to have avoided some of their requirements, but in retrospect did see advantages in structuring the academic experience of incoming freshmen.

I think it would be nice to require at least one course in one of them, like require one in each [area]. *I'm for the general.*

I didn't want to take math or a language, but the other things, spreading them out - When I first got here I really didn't know what to take, and it sort of like gave me direction the first year anyways.

I agreed with the basic and distribution requirements when we had it because I think that a typical freshman kid, I think that they should be directed as an incoming freshman. You are sort of forced into taking the right things. People should have a language and this way you can avoid taking a language, and you can avoid taking everything that makes sense.

Reaction to Their Basic and Distribution Requirements

Students were asked if in fulfilling their B&D requirements, they had discovered any new interests. A majority of them reported that they had indeed discovered new interests via their required courses (Table 3.2). Several men said they had chosen all interesting courses to fulfill their requirements. However, over one-third, more residents (48%) than commuters (18%), reported that no new interests had resulted from being exposed to a variety of required courses.

I think that happens a lot of times, that you take a course that you have to and then you do realize that you really like the material.

These general things, they weren't that good. They were too general for one thing. Most of the people who taught it just taught it as a matter of course, the rote kind of thing. You took your three tests or two tests, took your mark in it and said, "Well, that's out of the way." As a matter of fact, I can't even think of one that I was happy in.

TABLE 3.2 REACTION TO BASIC AND DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS

DISCOVERY OF INTERESTS	% of students
Found an interest via requirements	54
Requirements were interesting	8
No interest from required courses	38
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	(50)
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	(50)

Summary

Generally the responses of these students to the three academic changes were very favorable although a few students expressed reservations about each, and a very few reacted negatively to each change. When students discussed changes in the University since they had matriculated, these academic changes were frequently cited again as examples of increasing flexibility and progress toward improvement of the University program (see Changes in the University, p.40).

Academic Competition

Many students said that SUNY/B was academically competitive; only a few said it was not (Table 3.3).

> *People have to* [compete]. *Everybody I talk to, they are always worrying about grades and tests.*

> *Very. We've got 75 X majors in what I'm in now... and they tell us that they are only going to graduate 30 of us out of the 75, so that's pretty competitive.*

> *In the program I was in, and with the ability I had, it wasn't competitive, and I was glad of it.*

A few others said that whether or not there was competition depended on the type of course, their interest in a particular course, or the people who were taking the course; for example, pre-med or pre-dent students felt they had to be competitive in order to acquire an excellent undergraduate average to present to professional schools.

> *In some courses, like where you have 300 kids in the class and they grade on the curve, sometimes you're competing in those.*

> *Some people are competing especially for med schools now; there is competition among people who are applying to med schools.*

Although many students reported the presence of competition, 40 percent, especially residents (71%), said that they did not participate in that competition - that they did not choose to compete with others.

I don't feel I'm competing with anyone, I feel like I'm here to learn what I want to learn. I'm not so interested in grades anymore.

I haven't let it bother me. For one thing, I haven't even noticed even if it would have been, because that's not something that would worry me or something that I would object to simply because I don't care about it.

[It's] for the top spot; I don't want the top spot.

TABLE 3.3 ACADEMIC COMPETITION

PRESENCE		% of students
Yes		*68*
No		*16*
Depends: in some courses/according to my interest in the course/compete with myself		*12*
Don't know		*4*
COMMENTS		
No effect	40	
Less than at first	25	
More lately	7	
REACTIONS		
POSITIVE		*27*
Stimulating/inspires harder work/like it	26	
Good idea	18	
NEGATIVE and MIXED		*23*
Bad idea/dislike it	19	
Theory is good but I don't like it personally	3	
NUMBER OF STUDENTS		*(59)*
NUMBER OF RESPONSES		*(159)*

One-quarter of the students mentioned that there was less competition than in their earlier undergraduate years. Some of these attributed this difference to changes either in the courses or the grading options; others said their own attitude toward grades and marks had undergone a change.

> *In bigger classes, you know, the 100/200 level classes: there were so many students they had to make it on a curve so you were up against other people. With smaller classes it's not that way.*

> *Less than when I first came here and I think that is a lot of that because there are less courses and the pass/fail option. I don't think that the students are interested in competing anymore, they are doing away with it.*

> *I didn't find it competitive that much except the first year because I was scared... When I first got here I thought it was going to be really hard, and I realized that I could do all right, and I knew my capacities weren't really that bad. If there was more competition, then it would have been harder to get marks than it was for me.*

> *There was competition because I had to get better grades because I knew I was going to med school. I knew that's what the grade was for; that was almost more important than learning at the time, learning what was in the course. The grade was the most important thing. I had to get a bunch of good grades no matter what it was in. I just had to get those good grades, and that disappeared. The pressure for med school is off me now,* my grades don't mean anything as long as I pass. So I still like to get good grades because I like to learn what's there to offer. When you learn that, you do usually get a good grade, so it's working out. I'm doing better now without the pressure than I did before with the pressure. My grades are better.*

---

*Student had been accepted into professional school.

Not all students expressed their reaction to the presence of academic competition, but over one-fourth of the students considered it to be stimulating and conducive to their working harder. A few, more women (26%) than men (12%), considered competition a good idea in general and said that it was an integral part of life in or out of school.

> *Oh, its very, very competitive... I like the competition because it brings out the best in me.*
>
> *I think it is good really because the students have to study hard, and I think they get something out of it, more out of the course by really putting something into it.*
>
> *It's good if you don't get obsessed with it. There are plenty of people who want a college education, and if you're not willing to work, if you are not willing to put a little sweat into what you are going to get out of it, then I don't think you deserve to. I've worked hard for everything I've learned in and out of school, and I think that too many people expect that an education is owed to them.*
>
> *But I think that this is good because I think it is an academic challenge, and I think this stimulates intellectual growth and curiosity... I think it is just natural to compare oneself with everyone else and I'm sure that everybody does it.*

Nearly one-quarter of the students, including two who also expressed some positive feelings, commented that competition was a bad thing generally and particularly where learning was involved. They felt that competition soon changed from being stimulating to become depressing and counterproductive to learning.

> *I don't like it because I don't like working under pressure very much. It's difficult; it makes me get upset and then I can't work as well as I do when I don't have to work under pressure, but I think it makes me do a lot more than I would probably do otherwise.*

It's bad. I don't like competition. I think basically competition brings out the worst in people. I mean you have people fighting with each other, and you don't have people living together or working together... Because when it's competitive you're really set up against the other members of the class... it also sort of alienates you from the other people in class.

Summary

These students had first been asked about the presence of academic competition at SUNY/B in their second year interviews.* The pattern of their responses was quite similar in both second and fourth years. About two-thirds of the students reported the presence of competition (63% 1968, 68% 1970), and few reported its absence (11% 1968, 16% 1970). In both years there were those who said it depended on the course and the persons involved and because they did not choose to compete, competition had no effect on them personally.

Impressions of Courses

When students were asked their impressions of the courses they had taken over the years they were at SUNY/B, a variety of comments emerged. Most were general reactions, some were specific to courses in their major, and some were comparisons of earlier to later courses.

General

Students' general opinions of their courses were mixed but included more positive than negative comments. About a third reported that nearly all their courses had been very good, that there were very few exceptions to the overall quality of courses on this campus (Table 3.4).

I've never had a course yet that I haven't enjoyed.

I thought they've been pretty good. They've been very interesting and a bit challenging.

Wolfe, Nancy, *The University Experience, the second year*, University Research, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1971.

I would have to put them into two categories, those which I thought would help me specifically ...and those which would kind of make me a more intelligent person or a more knowledgable person anyhow... there's not too many classes really that didn't have any benefits at all. Most of them were pretty good.

TABLE 3.4 IMPRESSIONS OF UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

IMPRESSION	% of students
Positive: all or most were valuable	32
Mixed Reaction: some good, some bad	41
Negative: Most were boring, generally a waste of time	17
No general opinion	10
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	*(60)*
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	*(115)*

About as many expressed mixed reactions to their courses - generally more good than bad. A number of students specified that a few courses were really valuable, enjoyable, or the converse, that a few courses were really bad and a waste of time.

I had courses that I think of grade A and courses that I thoroughly disliked... Some courses that I thought were a total waste.

As I said there's certain outstanding ones... mostly I think I'll remember high points of the very, very good courses.

Only a few students said more of their courses were bad than were good.

I think a good part of them wasted my time... Generally over the last four years, I guess I've learned something from this University. I'd say most of what I've learned is outside the classroom. That was only two courses I really enjoyed in four years.

With a couple exceptions I was always dissatisfied with my courses because they were crummy courses. Well one exception, this semester I've had one teacher... he's the first teacher I've had since I got to this place. I was really surprised because he was interested in getting a lot of ideas across.

Nearly two-fifths of the students expressed reactions to courses in their major, and a majority of these praised the courses and content. The others expressed specific dissatisfaction with particular courses or with their departmental requirements.

It was work, there was a lot of work but I found it interesting. It's the first time I really got into my department, I enjoyed it.

They weren't practical at all... they haven't given anything to me that I could use in a practical way.

The major courses I took, we just got something which is as good as nothing as far as I'm concerned, or almost that.

Another kind of reaction expressed by some students was that in retrospect, courses in their third and fourth years were better and more interesting than courses taken in their first undergraduate years on campus. For most of these students, the increasingly positive reaction resulted from being able to concentrate on their major courses, i.e., those which were most meaningful to them and relevant to their academic goal. For a few others, the improvement was because their requirements, both general and for their major, were completed and they were taking "fun" or exploratory courses merely to fulfill the necessary hours for graduation.

The courses I've had in the last two years have really been the ones I feel are the most beneficial because I've had mostly courses that I really wanted in my major.

They were very good, especially the courses I had in my senior year. I think I finally learned something meaningful - something that I'm really going to use when I get out of here... I'd managed to tie together the things I learned in those three years. Without that last semester, I don't think my college education would have been worth anything.

I've reached the point now, I can take what I want.

Other reasons for the more favorable reaction to courses in the later undergraduate years were also given: completion of the initial basic and distribution requirements in which some students were not interested, and increased opportunities for independent study. A number of students commented that they enjoyed the opportunity of doing more independent study, and working and reading on their own.

> *There were courses that I still can see no purpose in having had to take... I mean the general University, the first two years. I was kind of disappointed in that.*

> *The freedom which I see is getting more and more with independent study type of projects... I'm taking an honors independent course... I'm working on a project myself and there's no end to it. I could work on it for years if I wanted to, but it's got to be done by May.*

Summary

In general, students' reactions to courses during their three and one-half years at SUNY/B were somewhat more favorable than unfavorable, and some reported that later course experiences were better than the earlier ones.

Satisfaction with Choice of Major

Many students were pleased with their choice of major, but a few expressed mixed feelings. About one-fifth said they were dissatisfied. The general reaction of each student was judged to be either positive, mixed, or negative and so reported in Table 3.5. However, a student whose general reaction was positive might also have given a response which was a specific criticism of his major.

> *I like it. I still have reservations about a lot of the teaching methods. I don't feel the courses are very adequate, a lot of them. But I still like X just as a subject, and I can put up with this lack of whatever you want to call it out of the department itself simply because I can turn back to the subject.*

The "Other" category contains unique responses from two men. One planned to transfer to another institution to obtain a major unavailable here; his comments concerned only his proposed major. The other

reported personal/financial difficulties arising from his choice of major because his parents expressed their disapproval of his choice by reducing their financial support. His own reaction was reported as positive.

In terms of specific responses, almost half the students expressed general satisfaction about all aspects of their major.

> *I think it's a good major, I like it. I think I've got a good education because I've taken quite a few, a diversity of courses, in lots of areas, and the major's allowed you to do that, to branch out and go into other fields.*

> *I don't know what I'm going to do, but I never regret majoring in what I majored in, even if I don't use X specifically... I'm really prejudiced because I think X is like a combination of all the Social Sciences. It's just everything all in one and I think it's a real education in the broad sense of the word.*

TABLE 3.5 SATISFACTION WITH CHOICE OF MAJOR

RESTRICTIONS	% of students Total
Positive	*71*
Negative	*19*
Mixed	*10*
Other	*3*
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	*(59)*
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	*(74)*

One-third of the whole group, but a majority of resident men (56%), linked their satisfaction with the choice of major as being the right one for them personally. They were pleased with themselves for having made a good choice.

I've always liked it otherwise I wouldn't have stayed in the program, and it's the only reason I came to school... so I like it a lot.

I've come to the point where I enjoy working with it, I enjoy studying for me.

I just always wanted to, and I did, and I'm glad I did.

Nearly one half of the students specifically assessed the faculty of their major department. Most of these, about one-third of the whole group, expressed favorable reactions only; a few were critical.

The faculty is different depending on what department you are in. For example, in X the faculty impressed me a great deal. I won't mention any names but by talking with some of them - probably one of my reasons for switching in [major] *was because I was impressed with the faculty.*

The department is fantastic up here. I have the highest praise for it. I'm really involved or at least I was, in any of the courses that I had taken. I was really impressed now that I look back... the people, the faculty... They are so well schooled and well educated themselves, and yet the majority of them teach so well. They share with the students, and you can really sense an interaction...

They must be the worst bunch of professors I've ever seen. [Major] *isn't the most exciting material to study anyway, but when you have these people who are so boring - I don't want somebody who is going to get up there in a clown suit and do exercises or things, but there's ways you can perk up a class and apply things to everyday living and what's really happening now instead of just reading out of a book... paragraph by paragraph from the book. It's just no good.*

In addition, a few of the students made favorable comments about specific aspects of their experience, for example, the way the department treated students, or the internship portion of their studies.

The department is very good. They cooperate with you. Any problems, they'll take care of it. There's no problem of friction between the faculty and students.

Although fewer than one-fifth of the students expressed predominantly negative opinions of their major, almost one-fourth were critical of some specific aspects of their major. Included among students making such criticisms are some whose general reaction to their major was favorable. Commuters (30%) made more specific criticisms of various aspects of their major than did residents (17%). Poor teaching or the departure of good teachers was one complaint; another included criticism of department requirements - that they were not relevant, were dull, or lacked appropriate depth. Another kind of criticism was of the department generally, e.g., that it was too research-oriented.

> *I still like the courses. I don't think that this is the best school to go to for it. And I can see where it is going downhill ever since I got into it because all the good teachers are leaving.*

> *I was expecting a little bit more, than what I've accomplished... I think a few of the different topics we haven't covered should have been covered in required courses.*

A few students, no resident men, regarded their choice of major with mixed emotions, i.e., their response included a mixture of both positive and negative reactions.

> *Well, it's a good experience, you know, this is what teaching is going to be like and I always thought I wanted to teach. After student teaching for 7 1/2 weeks... I'm bored... I don't even know now if I really want to teach.*

A few students would not repeat their original choice of major if they were able to choose over again, but they indicated that getting out of SUNY/B with a degree in something they didn't particularly like was preferable to staying longer in order to change their major.

> *As compared to everything else I guess I might have preferred the sciences or something more relevant to what I was planning to go into as a profession.*

> *Well, I had to major in something. I couldn't make it in X so I switched to X. It's just something to major in.*

'Cause it's the only thing I could graduate in four years in. I just wanted to get out of here. There's nothing here that really interested me, and there still isn't. I think if I had it all over again, I wouldn't come here... X was the only thing I would get out in four years, but I just wanted to get out with a degree.

In addition, three students expressed a generalized dissatisfaction with their major as an unhappy choice for them.

I majored in X from a kind of desperation because I couldn't finish a language.

I can't stand it any longer. I'm so bored.

Summary

Many students were satisfied with their choice of major, but a few expressed negative opinions either about their choice or a specific aspect of their experience in that department.

Opinions of Faculty

When students expressed opinions about their coursework, they frequently linked those comments with ones about faculty. As one student said,

I think any subject can be made interesting. It's up to the teacher.

TABLE 3.6 GENERAL IMPRESSIONS OF FACULTY

IMPRESSIONS		% of students
Positive		56
Positive	34	
Very positive, enthusiastic	22	
Mixed		41
No general impression		3
NUMBER OF STUDENTS		(50)
NUMBER OF RESPONSES		(82)

Students were also specifically asked their impressions of their faculty at SUNY/B. Some responded with an appraisal of faculty personalities or teaching skills, others commented on the qualifications and knowledge of their instructors. However they chose to approach the question, their opinions of faculty were predominantly positive (Table 3.6). Over half expressed favorable reactions; about two-fifths mixed favorable with unfavorable comments. No one expressed totally negative opinions, although two students said they were left with no general impression of faculty.

Nearly three-fifths of the students were pleased with the SUNY/B faculties. This group included more than one-fifth of the students who were very complimentary in their praise of SUNY/B faculty, and about one-third, who were positive, but somewhat less enthusiastic.

> *I found them to be very human people, very understanding; most of them are. There's been a couple of real arrogant professors that I've had and a couple that didn't seem to be too concerned about preparing organized, understandable lectures. But for the most part I think they were very understanding and that they knew that the conditions here were in turmoil. I mean we don't have enough room, and there's a lot of chaos involved in setting up your schedule, and nobody really quite knows the rules and regulations and they're always getting crossed up, and I think about that sort of thing they are very understanding.*

> *I think the faculty up here is really excellent. I can't say that everyone is excellent here. I don't want to generalize because I obviously haven't had every faculty member up here, but for the ones that I have had and from my impressions I would say that it is really a good group, and I think that I, for one, appreciate them very much. I admire them also.*

> *Overall, I think, excellent. I've had some professors that are just an experience in itself. Dr.X, for example..., he was just a tremendous lecturer. He had your interest, and we had some teachers from the department who'd come in during a normal lecture just to listen to him.*

They're generally very interesting and very highly educated... As I've gone along, I've found they've been more interesting.

Two-fifths of the students reported experience with both good and poor teachers. A number of students specified that their poor instructors had been graduate student teaching assistants or teachers of initial undergraduate classes.

I've had some very, very good teachers; I've had some fairly poor ones. I'd say I've had maybe only three poor ones and the rest have been good. And the reason I say they were poor, one English teacher just would read a book and say "Well, do you have any ideas?" We'd say no, and he'd say "Well, I don't have any ideas. I don't know what to think about it. Class dismissed" and this was it. And I don't consider that too much of a teacher, but most of the faculty have been very very good.

The professors were pretty good. You had some lousy ones and some good ones... One that I had that I don't think was very competent was... a grad student, and he didn't come half the time and the other times that he came, he didn't say anything. He gave everybody an A or a B so it was an easy grade, but it was boring.

I don't think anybody really doesn't know what they are doing; it's just that it doesn't come out right or they don't have it prepared well enough... that was the majority in the first two years.

Two students said they had no overall impression of their faculty.

I don't think I'm gonna remember anyone in particular... I don't feel one way or the other to really say anything on that... I guess communication was pretty good, but I'm left with no impression one way or the other.

Faculty Competence

Students were also asked to appraise the faculty in terms of two specific areas of competence: knowledge of subject matter and ability to communicate. Appraisal of faculty knowledge of subject matter was very favorable. A majority of the whole group praised the qualifications of the faculty very highly; over one-third were also favorably

impressed, but less so. Only a few described the faculty as having a sizeable group of those who were not knowledgeable as well as some who were (Table 3.7).

TABLE 3.7 FACULTY COMPETENCE

COMPETENCY		% of students
KNOWLEDGE OF SUBJECT MATTER		
Very knowledgeable, impressive faculty		56
Most are knowledgeable		36
Mixed - some are; some aren't knowledgeable		9
NUMBER OF STUDENTS		(56)
ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE		
Positive		53
communicate very well	35	
communicate OK	18	
Mixed		35
some can; some can't communicate	35	
Negative		8
many can't communicate	8	
Other		4
NUMBER OF STUDENTS		(51)
NUMBER OF RESPONSES		(51)

Students were less positive about the faculty's ability to communicate their knowledge well. A majority praised the faculty's ability to communicate; however, over one-third reported that their faculty were a mixture of those who could not, as well as those who could communicate. Many of the students defined communication as teaching. Thus, for them, the rating of faculty's ability to communicate was an assessment of teaching ability. More than the usual number of quotations from students are included in order to reveal the range of impressions that this group of students reported when they described the competence of faculty.

I think for the most part they're very qualified. I just wish that they would get a little more enthusiastic. Sometimes they just come into class and lecture and leave and that's about it, they don't really give you anything to look forward to, which was kind of disappointing.

I think I had very good teachers that know what they're doing. For the most part, they can teach. I've had a couple that know their stuff, they've written books on it, but they can't get it across to you. But most of them have been very good.

I don't think I've really had a competent teacher yet. I take that back, I've had one last summer. But I've had teachers who just read studies, quotes, I've had instructors that just whisper at the board, and I've had instructors that don't know the English language, which I suppose is not their fault, but it makes it hard to learn.

They have all been very intelligent men. I think some of them are unqualified teachers but that's the stress that this University seems to put on research rather than teaching which I feel is wrong... I think a minority, a large minority do care about their students, but the majority figures they have to teach a course to undergraduates to be kept on the payroll. Their main basis is writing and graduate work.

I've only had a few, ten maybe twelve, outstanding instructors, professors - people I would give the honorary title of professor because they deserve it. They just weren't mechanical blurs who stood up there and repeated their lecture notes that they have been giving for the past twenty years, maybe I'm lucky. Maybe that's the lot.

In many cases I didn't get from the teachers what he had to offer. Maybe it's because the classes were too big. In many cases I don't think the teachers are really teachers. I think they are more people who could be classified as very intellectual or academically oriented, and who know a lot about their subjects. But the ability to teach is a precious thing, a premium quality and I think it's rare.

It was great because not only did he know his subject matter, he communicated it in a way that you couldn't help but sit there spell-bound. All these ideas being thrown at you; you couldn't help but want to go out and read more, do more.

One student did not think it fair to judge how well a teacher communicated because the lecture-hall [illegible] presented too great a handicap.

I defy anyone to hold a four-hundred person lecture class and hold their attention. I don't see anybody doing it; I see very few big lectures filled up... I'll see maybe sixty students there, and then when the teacher gives the test there's four hundred. So that's the trouble with the school. It's a problem that just overwhelms the teacher. I imagine it would be pretty frustrating on the teachers.

Summary

Impressions of faculty at SUNY/B were more favorable than unfavorable. A majority of students reported that faculty was competent both in knowledge of subject matter and in ability to communicate.

Relationships with Faculty

Students were asked about their actual as well as their ideal student/faculty relationships. Relationships were defined by the interviewer (whenever a student needed an explanation) as classroom only, out-of-class: academic, and out-of-class: non-academic. Out-of-class: academic was described as a relationship in which the student discussed academic, but not necessarily only course-related subjects, with faculty either in offices or elsewhere. These out-of-class contacts varied from major advisement and suggestions of which courses to take, to discussion of related current events or a student's academic interests and problems. Out-of-class relationships were those including discussions of non-academic topics and/or social relationships (Table 3.8).

Most students reported having out-of-class contacts or relationships; only a few reported they had not encountered faculty outside a classroom setting. However, only one of those students thought that it would not have been possible to establish out-of-class contacts if he had tried to do so. A number also reported being friendly with

Teaching Assistants, whom they evidently did not regard as faculty. No definition of "faculty" was given by the interviewer; however it is evident from students' responses that they held varying perceptions. An additional confusion may have been created because in the preceding interview, and in a few of these interviews, a non-academic relationship had been differently defined as "talking to faculty outside of the classroom about something other than the subject matter they are teaching you."

For example, one student, who was hired to work for a professor he had never taken a course from, got to know that professor but reported no out-of-class faculty relationships.

> *Generally not. I was working with a professor as a research assistant. I didn't take his course, but I helped him. And on a few occasions, nothing outstanding, I've talked to him about other things.*

TABLE 3.8 REPORTED RELATIONSHIPS WITH FACULTY

RELATIONSHIP		% of students
NON-ACADEMIC: SOCIAL AND PERSONAL		*63*
Relationship with Teaching Assistant	27	
Non-Academic: unspecified	27	
Major department relationships	25	
On campus	12	
Off campus	12	
ACADEMIC: OUT OF CLASS		*25*
After class or in office	23	
Identification out of class	5	
ACADEMIC: ONLY IN CLASS		*12*
Not with faculty but with Teaching Assistant	5	
NUMBER OF STUDENTS		*(60)*
NUMBER OF RESPONSES		*(94)*

Non-Academic Relationships

Nearly two-thirds of these students reported non-academic or social-personal relationships with faculty. Over one-fourth said they had become acquainted with some of their Teaching Assistants. A number of students commented that it was easier to establish friendly relations with someone who was closer in age to themselves.

> *The only ones I've known are the graduate students, and they aren't really the doctors. The graduate students are the ones that are lab instructors... we used to go in there and talk to them - about skiing, and played football outside this last semester... they're really nice to know... they all know what you're going through 'cause they did the same thing a couple of years ago themselves.*

> *I happen to know a X lab teacher I had. I didn't know him when I came in. He was a good guy. Other than that I don't think so.*

About the same number of students reported having a non-academic relationship with faculty without going on to explain what they meant.

> *with some of the faculty, yes*

> *I've known a couple of grad students and a couple of professors from political science in my freshman year.*

One-quarter of the students described interactions with faculty in their major department. Generally students had repeated courses or contacts with these faculty as well as having opportunities to meet with them informally at departmental functions like lectures and coffee hours. Mutual interest in the subject matter provided a bond between student and teacher which frequently evolved into friendly interaction on a more or less personal basis. A few of the students who listed non-academic relationships indicated whether they were getting together with faculty on campus or off campus.

> *A second man who I used to sit around with and talk about what it meant to be going into X and what X meant... Another man in my own deparmtment who I'm taking a course from and who I can sit around with and talk about diverse things.*

Well, it's mostly the X professors I've gotten to know better because that's my major, and their intellectual capacity just overwhelms me... And they're crazy because you can talk to them. They are really human... The ones I got to know were, really. When I would go to their office about the course... A lot of times where our friendship is found is because we disagree... We might go for coffee somewhere, things like that. Of course they are older, too. They must be at least as old as my father.

Like you have a teacher in the X department that you go out and go down to [off-campus restaurant] *have a couple of beers with and rap to him.*

Academic Relationships

One-quarter of the students described academically-oriented out-of-class relationships with faculty. Usually these contacts occurred when students sought out professors after class or in their offices to pursue interesting topics, to discuss papers, to seek advice on course selection. Sometimes these discussions included current national or campus issues or personal interests of the students. A few students mentioned that being known and recognized in class by the teacher was a benefit of out-of-class contacts.

I've been to visit a lot of professors in their offices, not that I know them personally as I say I got to know Dr.X from X, but I have gone to their office, I have spoken to them quite a few times and I guess that's about it.

It's very hard to say because a lot of faculty members you know sometimes want you in the office to discuss something, and I'm one of those people whose mind is very irrelevant. I jump topics, and I just don't see the need to talk to anybody about anything specific, which is bad. I tend to ramble and like to talk to some of the people about things other than school. But as far as actually knowing them reasonably well outside of class, probably not.

Some students indicated that they thought such out-of-class relationships would be possible if they had made an effort to achieve them.

If I had gotten to know a professor, whoever, the fact that he was a professor certainly wouldn't have bothered me, but I didn't go out of my way to get to know any of them on a real social basis.

It was great to be in the small groups with him, and then some people were able to break the barrier and get to be with him outside of class time... I didn't have the time or the energy at that time to put myself out and get involved that way. Otherwise, it would have been a great experience because he's just a good person to be with.

A few students expressed their belief that personal relationships were not possible between faculty and students.

Dr. X would be very willing to set up appointments in his office to meet and talk with you, but there its sort of a formal atmosphere... He used to stress that he didn't like to waste time so if you had something specific to talk about, make an appointment. He sort of let you know he didn't want to just sit down and talk with people... but it would have been good to meet with him personally.

I've gone to professors when I've had problems and talked to them and had them help me... I think a lot of them will do almost anything for you as far as class work is concerned, but after that I really get no indication from any of them that there's anything besides that. After that it's all cut-off or something.

Ideal Faculty-Student Relationships

When students were asked what they considered to be an ideal faculty/student relationship, a majority of them described interactions which would include personal contact between students and professors in order to promote and enhance the learning experience either in a particular class or in the general major field of the students. These academically oriented relationships did not exclude discussion of personal interests and experiences (e.g., getting to know some faculty in my major), but the underlying purpose of the relationship was enhancement of the student's learning experience.

I think it would have been nice, I don't think it was absolutely necessary, but it would have been nice. I think you understand why people do what they do - especially maybe what they're teaching and what they're trying to get across to you if you know a little bit more about them.

TABLE 3.9 IDEAL FACULTY-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP

RELATIONSHIP	MR	MC	FR	FC	Total
Academic Orientation	*24*	*73*	*66*	*66*	*56*
Available to students, encourage students to approach them, ask questions.					37
Small group contact with professor (e.g., social and academic groups in department), seminar type classes to enable professors to know students better/more interaction in class.					18
Major department, relationship based on common interest in subject.					11
Social/Personal Orientation	*76*	*27*	*33*	*33*	*44*
Personal one-to-one relationship/personal communication					44
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	*(17)*	*(22)*	*(9)*	*(9)*	*(57)*
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	*(23)*	*(33)*	*(12)*	*(9)*	*(77)*

Social/personal oriented responses included those from students who would seek friendships among faculty just as they would among any other group with whom they were associated. A few said that an ideal faculty-student relationship ought to be similar to any other ideal relationship. All students who gave personally oriented responses seemed to be considering relationships with faculty in general, not just those from whom they were taking courses.

> *Whatever you consider ideal relationships, I guess, ideal with anybody is ideal with them... They strike me as people when they're outside the classroom just like anybody else.*

Each student's response was rated as either academically or personally oriented; these two categories are, therefore, mutually exclusive. However, the subcategories are not (Table 3.9).

Academic

Within the academic orientation category, responses most frequently referred to the availability and approachability of faculty. Students would like to feel free to have ready access to faculty for information, explanations, and advice. A few men said they would like to have advice about selection of courses and majors. A few students commented that ideally faculty should invite and encourage students to meet with them. The emphasis of these responses was on the ready availability of helpful faculty.

> *...if the faculty member lets the students know that they are interested, and if the students want help outside of class or want to just talk or discuss things that went on in class; if they're* [faculty] *available - not just available and disinterested - but available and interested and that they want to help the student and talk to him.*

> *...feeling that the teacher doesn't mind answering questions after class and that he's interested.*

> *As much as a teacher seems to show that he cares, I think you still need a verbal invitation. I feel I would like to take him up on that and I feel that he is offering to me a lot of things as a person... In a lecture it's pretty hard to do... but I think showing that you are a person - I guess in a smaller class it becomes more possible - is nice and pretty valuable.*

A few students discussed the desirability of having small classes and groups which facilitate students and teachers getting to know each other as well as the subject matter. The emphasis was on ways to humanize the educational experience. They felt that promoting the acquaintanceship of teachers and students would enhance learning.

> *I think more of a limited size, more of a closer - something that allows closer ties, a little bit more tightly together. I think it is better. It makes students more relaxed, and I think they get more involved in the whole situation, and therefore they are more eager to learn.*

I think it is better if you have a smaller class so you can know your professors better and they can know you. I think it is better if you know each others' concerns and problems. I think it makes it a more total learning experience.

The kind of thing like College E or something where they meet at the home of a faculty member or something once in a while. I've never been to one, but most of the kids that I've heard talk about it feel that it is really good. You don't talk necessarily about school, but you get to know the instructor. But there's other kids there, so you don't feel that you are trying to get points with them.

A number of students said they would specifically be interested in getting to know faculty in their major department, and to have opportunities for out-of-class interactions based on their common interest in the subject matter.

I think it is a good thing if you can go up and talk to them and get to know them. I guess you should get to know at least some of them in your major field for recommendations or if you have any questions... it's good to know them for advisement purposes like - if you have a question... that isn't really pertinent in the class. It's good to know somebody you can ask.

I think that the big link between a faculty member and myself is actually the material that you are working with. I think that's the determining factor in a faculty-student relationship. If you are both interested in something, in the same thing, then that is going to create a rapport between the two people. I think that that would be part of the ideal, somehow and... the subject matter has to be the linking factor.

Social/Personal

Over two-fifths of the students expressed interest in establishing personal relationships with faculty. Resident men more than any other group considered personally oriented interactions as the ideal in faculty-student relationships.

Get to know the teacher and let him get to know you... I've known some like Dr.X... I've known him four years now. I've had him, and he's been a good friend; and one teacher I even went out with her and her boy friend and my girl friend. This was after I had her.

I can take more advantage of a person who is not only a teacher but a friend... I can approach this person not as a teacher but as a wise friend or a friend who is knowledgeable in what I'm doing, and what I'm experiencing, and there's like fantastic communications... These people have experienced a lot of the same things I'm experiencing so I can go to them and talk about personal problems.

For me it would be just someone I could go in - just like I could talk to my roommate about a book I've read - just go and talk to the teacher and not have any hierarchy in the relationship like this. I think it's interesting to get to know what your professors think.

Expressing an opposite point of view, a few students commented that differences of age and status between professors and students precluded really personal relationships from materializing.

I might have liked to meet them but I just didn't feel like that was right... That's a hard obstacle for a lot of students, they just feel funny about it. They think the teacher is in another world and that he might not want to meet you.

Summary

Most students reported having established out-of-class contacts with faculty during their four years at SUNY/B. A majority described ideal faculty-student relationships in academic terms: they wanted faculty to be available to and interested in students because they thought improved relationships would enhance learning experiences. Others, especially resident men, thought that social/personal relationships with faculty would be desirable.

Academic Plans

For many students a significant feature of the fourth year after they entered SUNY/B was the culmination of their undergraduate study. Two students had finished in January 1970; two-thirds expected to graduate in May, and a few anticipated completion of the necessary hours for graduation in summer session (Table 3.10). Included among those who expected to graduate by August 1970 were over three-quarters of the residents, and nearly all of commuter women, but only three-fifths of the commuter men. Indeed, one-third of these commuter men, only one of whom was in a standard five year program, and nearly one-fifth of the resident men did not expect to complete undergraduate work until 1971, five years after matriculation. Only two students anticipated that they would take two additional years to complete their studies here. A few of these men were willing to be dilatory in the hope of continuing to receive draft deferments.

Post-graduate Study

Students were asked about both their desire for and plans for post-graduate study. Almost all students expressed some intention of continuing their education in the future, although not all had specific plans and goals (Table 3.10).

The post-graduate educational plans of these students are similar to those of 1971 Berkeley graduates reported by L.L. Baird.* A few more of the SUNY/B students planned immediate attendance (42% vs. 38.5%) and about the same percentage (5% vs. 7%) had no plans for further education.

Nearly half the men** had plans for further study immediately after graduation; half of these planned to go to professional schools, half to graduate schools. Every one of the resident men said he wanted to go on to further study.

Somewhat fewer women*** reported plans for immediate attendance. Some students in the earlier part of this set of interviews were still waiting for acceptance to graduate schools or for financial aid offers in order to make final decisions about further study.

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*Baird, Leonard L. *The Graduates: A Report on the Plans and Characteristics of College Seniors*, Educational Testing Service, Princeton 1973.

**This figure includes one male commuter already attending professional school.

***This figure includes one female resident taking graduate hours at SUNY/B.

TABLE 3.10 GRADUATE AND POST-GRADUATE PLANS

ACADEMIC PLANS	% of students
PLANS FOR GRADUATION	
January 1970	3
May 1970	65
Summer Session 1970	8
January & May 1971	20*
May 1972	3
Went directly to professional school without baccalaureate degree	2
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	(66)**
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	(66)
PLANS FOR POST-GRADUATE WORK	
Begin September 1970	42
Begin September 1971	11
Begin beyond 1971 (no specific plans)	39
No attendance planned	5
Already attending/taking hours	3
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	(62)
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	(62)

*Includes one student in a 5-year program.

**Includes all students in the sample who were currently enrolled in higher educational institutions here or elsewhere.

I have been accepted at several schools. I'm thinking pretty strongly about going to NYU.

For various reasons, a number of students expected to begin graduate school one year after graduation. About two-fifths of the group expected either full or part-time further study to be one of their future activities but had no specific plans for it. Some students commented that they needed a break in the continuous schooling which had been their life for seventeen years.

I'd like to go for my masters once I get a job when I can go to school summers. I'd have to work full-time and go to school part-time.

...by the time I decided, I really wouldn't have been able to get a fellowship. Financially I can't afford to go to school on my own - especially living away. So... I would stay out a year and starting late next summer I would start to apply for the fellowship.

Not just now, no. I think I need a break, after all these years it's got me down really. I've just had enough.

I don't know if I would go to Dental School right now if it wasn't for the draft. I might take a year off or so and travel a little bit, work a little bit.

Vocational Goals

Students were also asked about their ultimate vocational goal. Responses to the question are presented in Table 3.11. For some students their ultimate goal was different from their immediate one.

I'm not sure. I think I'd like to go to Law School in a couple of years. After the draft. Right now I'm going to try to teach for the next couple of years.

A number of students were weighing more than one possibility. Furthermore, all their stated goals were dependent on successful accomplishment of the steps leading to them (e.g., acceptance to and then making it through Dental School). These limitations should be kept in mind when considering their responses.

TABLE 3.11 PLANNED VOCATIONAL FIELDS

VOCATION	Number* of Men	Women	Total
Teaching, elementary or secondary level	7	11	18
Teaching, college level	11	7	18
Dentistry	6		6
Business: manager/owner	6		6
Publications/Public Relations	2	2	4
Engineering	3		3
Homemaking		3	3
Law	3		3
Psychology	2	1	3
Social Welfare	1	2	3
Medicine: doctor/technician	1	1	2
Pharmacy	2		2
Physical Therapy	1	1	2
Research/Librarian		2	2
Chemistry	1		1
Computer Science		1	1
Government	1		1
Music	1		1
Tool and Dye Making	1		1
Veterinary Medicine	1		1
No formal occupation	2	1	3
Undecided	3	2	5
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	(45)	(32)	(77)
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	(55)	(33)	(89)

*N.B. Number of students, not percentage of students.

Teaching was the most popular vocational field for all students, either at the elementary - secondary level or at the college level. A few students had not decided at which level and so indicated both.

> *I'm not sure, but I think I'd like to start teaching in the high school and then maybe come up to college level eventually.*

Elementary - secondary teaching was the most frequent choice of resident women (47%), but was less popular with the other groups.

> *I'll try a little bit of creative poverty by teaching high school... I have always wanted to teach physics.*

Teaching at the college level was the most popular choice of vocation for both resident men and commuter women. One-third of both these groups said they were considering becoming professors.

> *I want to become a teacher. I'd like to teach at the college level in chemistry or something similar.*

> *I like the idea of teaching in a university 'cause it gives you quite a bit of personal freedom and it's an interesting thing.*

Since a majority of women indicated some type of teaching as their vocational goal, not many other vocational choices were given.

A trend noted across the interviews is the increasing number of students choosing teaching as a vocation. Twenty of the 99 students in the first year said their vocational preference was teaching either at elementary-secondary or college level. In the third year, 21 students of 82 picked teaching, and nine of these reported their interest in higher education. In this fourth year, 31 of the 77 students were considering teaching; 18 of these indicated their possible interest in doing so at the college level. It is interesting that after four years in the University setting, increasing numbers of students apparently regarded professors as vocational models.

In the fourth year, only three students were completely undecided about their vocational goals, and two women commuters, were indefinite but thought that if they did something, it would probably be teaching.

Three women said they intended to be homemakers only, with no other vocational goal. One resident woman indicated no formal occupation but did not specify homemaking, and two men also intended to have no formal occupation. Two of these students indicated a desire to serve as agents of social change. The other intended to live off the land in a commune.

I don't think I have an ultimate vocational goal... maybe work a week out of a month just to give me enough money to live on, and then do political organizing... I can see working a month and then not working for another three months; I need very little money to live on.

Chapter Summary

These students' reports of their academic experiences represent their idiosyncratic summaries of experiences in classrooms of the University. As such, they reveal not only how a group of students perceive their own experiences, but also what assumptions underlie their criticism or acceptance of any negative experiences. Many students reported the presence of academic competition. Their reactions to courses were varied but generally more favorable than unfavorable, and they reported more positive than negative reactions to faculty. Indeed, most students reported some kind of out-of-class relationships with faculty. Ideally, they thought that students and faculty getting to know one another better would facilitate learning experiences.

They were critical of some of their academic experiences, most frequently those in large lecture classes. They expressed a preference for smaller classes in which students and faculty could interact, but usually added that because of the large size of the University they did not regard it as a feasible suggestion. Their reactions to academic life were more positive than negative. The largest proportion of favorable responses was in reaction to the academic changes which were instituted by the University in their fourth year.

CHAPTER IV

STUDENT FINANCES, EMPLOYMENT, AND EXTRACURRICULAR INTERESTS

The division of the interview sample into resident or commuter groups based on residence status in their freshman semester has been retained over the years as part of the analysis of data.* Generally in this report of the fourth year interview, responses have not been presented on that basis. In this discussion of student finances, employment, and participation in extracurricular activities, however, the students' original residence group appeared to be an influencing factor.

The actual living arrangements of the 1970 group were no longer accurately described by their original residence status labels. In their fourth year about two-fifths of the interview group were living in households of their own (usually apartments); almost one-third were living in parental homes, and only a few students were in University housing. This information will be helpful to keep in mind as background for consideration of any residence-commuter differences.

Financing Their College Education

When students were asked how their college education had been financed, over three-fourths of the students reported financial assistance from their parents (Table 4.1). About three-fifths said they used funds derived from their own employment. A majority had scholarships, and over one-quarter reported making use of student loans. Although every full-time student was entitled to a state scholar incentive award, only about one-fourth specifically mentioned receiving one. In general, students' financial support was a combination of two or more sources.

> *Through my parents and Regents Scholarships and Incentive. The scholarship and incentive has covered most of the tuition, and they* [parents] *have supported my living expenses.*

Because of the several combinations of sources as well as the open-ended form of the question, it was impossible to determine in most cases what the primary source was or even which, the student or parent, provided more resources. In the few cases where students volunteered such information, about as many said their parents, not they, were the source of their funding (18%) as indicated that they, not their parents, financed their own education (20%).

> *My parents all the way.*

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*See Chapter I p. 1.

TABLE 4.1 SOURCES OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT OVER FOUR YEARS

SOURCE OF FUNDS		% of students
PARENTS		77
Initial assistance only	13	
Self-earnings/savings		61
Scholarships		55
Scholar incentive award		28
Loans		27
NUMBER OF STUDENTS		(60)
NUMBER OF RESPONSES		(154)

However, no assumption can be made that those who did not mention parental aid did not receive some. For example, five commuters who did not specify receiving any parental assistance were living in their parental home at the time of their interviews. It is probable that the living expenses of these students were subsidized by their parents. One mentioned nominal room rent; others did not say whether they were paying anything.

A few students reported receiving only initial, not continuing parental help. They had received funds only for one semester or just for the first year or two. No resident women reported this situation. Only one of them did not specify parents as a principal source of support; she had a combination of scholarships and loans to cover her costs.

> *Well for two years my parents paid my tuition, and then the last two I was working so I was able to pay for it.*

> *My first year my parents did, paid everything to get me started and then working and loans to get through. They wanted to, but I'd rather have done it myself.*

Scholarship, and my parents pay for some things. They pay for the fees and quite a few of the books. I pick up some of the books, too, myself; and like I said, plus I've got the scholarship. I think my parents are really lucky. It hasn't cost them that much.

Sixty-one percent of the students had earned part or all of their expenses themselves. They reported working during summers, during high school, and/or during college to obtain the necessary funds.

I've been paying for it. I get the hundred dollar incentive and then its cracking off X dollars every semester myself. But I pay for it, and when I get out of college, I won't owe anybody anything. It'll be mine.

Over one-fourth of the students also reported that loans had been a part of their funding.

I've been working and for two years I got the scholarship... and I have a National Defense Loan and a New York Higher Education Loan, and I'm working.

As entering freshmen these students had reported parental encouragement to attend college. In this fifth interview most students indicated that parental encouragement had also been given in the form of financial assistance. Further, when those students who were working were asked if their own employment was necessary for their remaining in school, many of them replied that it was not an absolute necessity because their parents were willing and able to help out with educational expenses, including those which the student's earnings were covering.

I have a Regents Scholarship which covers most of the tuition... and other than that it's been through my dad. He's always wanting to help me, and I'm always wanting to try to help myself and when it comes to money - for school and things he wants to give me the money. I've worked most of the summers except the summer after my freshman year when I went to summer school for six weeks. And I try and use this money for school because that's what it's meant for, and he wants me to save it so I'll have something when I get out, but we usually compromise.

TABLE 4.2 STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

STATUS	% of students Residents	Commuters	Total
EMPLOYED	*30*	*82*	*59*
1 - 10 hours per week	10	18	13
11 - 20 hours per week	15	32	25
over 20 hours per week	10	29	20
more than one job/hours variable	11	6	8
NOT EMPLOYED	*70*	*18*	*41*
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	*(27)*	*(34)*	*(61)*
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	*(41)*	*(42)*	*(83)*

Employment

Over the four years, nearly two-thirds of these students have worked to provide part of their college expenses. A number indicated that they preferred to pay their own way; others were obliged to. In the fourth year only seven students, down from fifteen in the third year, said it was necessary for them to work during the school year. Of the two residents who said that working was financially necessary, one was unemployed and desperately looking for a job.

This information should be considered in conjunction with the repeated assertions over the series of interviews that for most students it was not really financially necessary to work during the school year. Earnings from summer employment provided money for a number of students. For some students working during the school year meant being able to have their own car or a more expensive social life, but for many it also meant that their books, fees, or other school expenses were paid for from their own funds rather than their parents' although parental help was usually available.

Student working to pay for his education:

I haven't had too much of a problem. My funds are low but not enough to stop me from scraping up the money for school. My mother would [help] *if I needed it, but I don't really need it.*

Let's put it this way. It wasn't financially necessary for me to work while I was going to school, to work full-time to stay in school. It has been fine.

A majority of students were employed while attending SUNY/B in their fourth year.

I've been working ever since I started college at some job or other.

The pattern of resident-commuter employment differences, which was noticeable in data from earlier interviews, was also found in the fourth year. A much larger percentage of commuters than residents were working while attending school. In the third year nearly two-thirds of the commuters were employed, compared to one-third of the residents. In the fourth year 82 percent of the commuters were employed compared to 30 percent of the residents.

One-fourth of the students, including one-third of the commuters, had jobs which required 11-20 hours of work per week. Other commuters were working over 20 hours per week.

It's only 29. I work 7 1/4 hours a day, from 9 till 5:15. I worked about 28, 29 hours [per week] *last semester. I worked about that much every semester since I've been in school.*

All the employed residents worked on campus although one also held an off-campus office job. Three were Residents Assistants in the dorms; Commuters were less likely than residents to be employed on campus although almost one-fourth held on-campus jobs, e.g., in the library or for particular departments. Some commuters held what are considered to be traditional student-type jobs, e.g., bus boy or grocery stock boy. Others held office jobs, managed departments in stores, or worked in manufacturing concerns. The pharmacy majors all worked in drugstores. They, along with a number of others, reported that their employment provided relevant vocational experience. A few others said that they had become interested in a particular vocational goal as a result of their employment experiences.

Bussing and starting to wait on tables now... it's only five days, but it's like five hours six hours each day. I've worked there for almost a year, but I've just started waiting tables recently.

I want the job for experience because a lot of time I work in the prescription department of the drugstore.

Counted in the employed group were several students who stopped working for part of the fourth year in order to provide sufficient time for the student teaching or internship required by their major.

> *But this semester I'm going to be student teaching, and that's going to be a burden. "It's full time job," in quotes, and I think a job would knock me out now. But last semester I didn't have that much to do.*

About two-fifths of the students were not working during the school year. A number of residents reported that they chose not to work in their fourth year. Instead they preferred to spend their time reading and/or exploring interesting aspects of the University experience.

> *Like I said, I've been meeting people and been relating with people.*

> *No, I was going to work when I first came back this semester, but I decided to take it easy and read.*

What effect did working have on the academic or social life of these students? Resident women (80%) and commuter men (46%) said that working did interfere or that it would if they had a job. Commuter women (10%) and resident men (18%) were less likely to think so. These opinions may offer some insight into why so few resident women were working. On the other hand, about one-third of the commuter men were working more than twenty hours per week while attending school, which may help to explain why they thought being employed did interfere.

Benefits of employment, aside from economic ones, were similar to those reported in previous interviews by working students. Social benefits included friendships with co-workers and opportunities to meet and deal with people in the course of the job. A few students reported a personal benefit of having to become organized and to budget their time efficiently because they were working.

> *I always enjoyed my job, and I enjoy the people I work with, and since it is a small company, we are all very friendly.*

> *I have a lot more to do, and I just have to get organized or I don't get anything done. I really think it does help.*

Only three students were dissatisfied with their jobs.

> *I'd like to get another job, I guess... I'm just getting tired of the job. In the past two years, up until this year, even the beginning of this year, it was more fun than anything else 'cause you work with other kids, but now it's getting to be like a regular job; it's getting boring already.*

Of the eleven students who were no longer involved in higher education, seven were employed full-time; one was in the service; and two were homemakers with infants. One did not indicate what she was doing.

TABLE 4.3 ATTENDANCE OF EXTRACURRICULAR EVENTS

ATTENDANCE		% of students
Yes		95
No		5
EVENTS		
Cultural (concerts, recitals, plays, exhibits)	49	
Movies	47	
Athletic	46	
Intellectual (lectures, speakers, readings)	34	
Political	14	
Social (dances, mixers)	7	
Religious or social work activities	5	
COMPARISON		
More	25	
Same	20	
Less	31	
Can't compare/different ones	23	
TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS		(59)
TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONSES		(267)

Involvement in Extracurricular Activities

Students still registered at SUNY/B in their fourth year were asked about their involvement in extracurricular activities, i.e., both their attendance of events and/or their participation in organizations either on or off-campus.

As might be expected, nearly all the students had attended events both on-campus and off-campus (Table 4.3), with somewhat more residents attending on-campus ones and more commuters attending ones off-campus.

Cultural events (concerts, recitals...), movies, and athletic events were the most frequently attended, with intellectual events (lectures, speakers...), next most popular. More men than women attended athletic events, and more women than men attended intellectual ones.

When students compared the frequency of their attendance of events in the fourth year to that of other years, they were fairly evenly divided as to greater or lesser frequency or being unable to make a comparison.

As in previous years, interviewees were asked about their membership in campus organizations. All the women had participated in some campus organization at some time during their college years; however, a few of the men had never belonged to any (Table 4.4). Some of the commuters belonged to organizations off-campus. Although a few students were participating more in the fourth year; the largest proportion, especially resident men, reported less participation in organizations.

TABLE 4.4 MEMBERSHIP IN ORGANIZATIONS

MEMBERSHIP	% of students RM	CM	RW	CW	TOTAL
CAMPUS ORGANIZATIONS					
Yes	*35*	*54*	*60*	*40*	*47*
No	*65*	*46*	*40*	*60*	*53*
None presently	65	36	40	20	42
None ever	6	23	-	-	10
OFF-CAMPUS ORGANIZATIONS	-	18	-	40	14
PARTICIPATION					
More than previously					8
Same as previously					22
Less than previously					39
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	*(17)*	*(22)*	*(10)*	*(10)*	*(59)*
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	*(39)*	*(46)*	*(23)*	*(24)*	*(132)*

Benefits of Involvement

These students gave a variety of reasons for being or not being involved on campus. The personal benefits of involvement cited most frequently were that their activities provided personal growth and satisfaction by broadening their interests and experiences (Table 4.5). Students also mentioned that they regarded extracurricular activities as good sources of fun, enjoyment, and relaxation.

> *If anything it's given me the chance to experience unlimited number of things and that I wouldn't have experienced if I wasn't here. It's got me involved in things; I can't think of specifics right now, but it's got me involved in a lot of things and it's - I've been able to pass judgment on a number of things I never even would have got involved in. It's just - it's widened my interests.*

One-fifth of the students described social benefits that they were aware of from their involvement. They particularly mentioned the opportunities for social interaction and getting to know more people in a friendly setting. A few students also commented on their experiences with extracurricular activities as helping them to learn more about people and how they behave, as well as learning to carry and share responsibility with other people.

> *I think you get to know the students a little bit better, more than just being in the classroom, and the faculty, too.*

> *It's contributed in meeting other people, meeting new friends and meeting other people that are not friends of mine but finding out about how they think, you know, like generally more conservative.*

Nearly as many described intellectual benefits such as the cultural stimulation of the many concerts, readings and speakers who came to campus. They felt that a great variety of opportunities was available to students at SUNY/B.

> *I think between music, the cultural aspects, with music and athletic events - it was so available and it was so inexpensive to do it. If I did it in the community, it would be more expensive - It would be a shame if I didn't do these sort of things, and it's not just like I go there because it's cheap or because it comes out of my fees, because I enjoy it. And I want to become more stimulated culturally.*

TABLE 4.5 REASONS FOR INVOLVEMENT OR NON-INVOLVEMENT WITH EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

BENEFITS AND REASONS		% of students
Benefits of Involvement		
Personal		25
Personal growth, satisfaction, interest	13	
Fun, relaxation, and enjoyment	13	
Social		20
Social interaction, friendly atmosphere	11	
Learn about people, responsibility to others	9	
Intellectual		18
Cultural stimulation/variety of interest		
Vocational		9
Valuable experience/learning relevant to career		
Other		11
Opportunities more available, convenient, less expensive		
Reasons for Non-Involvement		
Employment		13
Inadequate number, kind of event/lack of facilities, spirit, publicity		9
Living distance from campus		5
Money lack limits participation to free events		2
NUMBER OF STUDENTS		*(30)*
NUMBER OF RESPONSES		*(56)*

A few students described vocational benefits derived from extracurricular experiences which were relevant to their career goals. A few described other benefits, principally that the opportunities on campus were useful, convenient, and cheaper than other places.

> *Well, it* [Ski Club] *makes skiing cheaper. It's just a convenient way to get people together and go skiing and to make it less expensive.*

Reasons for Non-Involvement

Several reasons were mentioned for not participating in activities. As in the third year, the principal one was that employment limited participation because it consumed so much of a student's time. Other personal obstacles included living away from campus far enough to have transportation problems, or being hampered by a lack of money.

A few students criticized the inadequacy or inavailability of particular kinds of events, publicity, spirit, or facilities which they felt were lacking on campus and prevented greater student involvement in extracurricular activities (e.g., a large auditorium).

Change in Cultural and Recreational Interests

Did the cultural and recreational interests of these students change during the years of their University Experience? About two-thirds of the students said they had. Generally they reported that they had expanded their interests, which now covered a wider range of topics. More residents, especially resident men (81%), than commuters reported changed interests (Table 4.6).

> *I didn't have much of a social life, and I wasn't too interested in cultural, and I wasn't too concerned about social problems either, I mean like everything I'm interested in - I must have been a vegetable before when I was in high school because everything that seems important and vital to me now, I had no interests in then.*

About one-third of the students, including nearly half the women commuters, reported no change in their interests. They had come to SUNY/B with a set of cultural and recreational interests in which they continued to maintain their interest and participation.

TABLE 4.6 CHANGE IN INTERESTS: CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL

DESCRIPTION	% of students
CHANGE	*65*
More cultural interests	38
Interests more extensive, wider range, less purely social-date oriented/greater interest in socializing	29
Added new interests, took up creative work (e.g., painting)	24
Changed taste in music	21
Greater interest in sports now	16
More interest in civil rights and political issues	7
Less interest in sports: only recreational or spectator	6
NO CHANGE	*34*
Continue interests in sports, recreational	28
Same cultural interests	16
Same interests but less time (or more money) to pursue them: read less, less TV viewing	7
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	*(68)*
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	*(134)*

I think they are just about the same. I don't think I've changed. Maybe some people would, but I really think I'm the same.

How had their interests changed? Nearly two-fifths, more residents (47%) than commuters (28%), said they had increased their interests in cultural activities. They sought out museums, art galleries, serious movies, and books. A number said that reading was a continuing interest. Painting, drama, dance were other reported interests.

When I came as a freshman, I really wasn't too interested in concerts or lectures or anything in that vein, but I think that since then especially over this last year, I've found that I get an awful lot of enjoyment out of things, like the Bartok string quartet. So my interests have changed. In my freshman year, I think, rather than go to something like that, I would have preferred to study or study from a book, memorize, or anything. So I think that my interests have definitely changed.

I guess I'm interested in movies in a more serious kind of way - a cinematic dilettante or something. It's just more than amusement; it's an art. You go in there looking for serious things.

I don't know if it's really changed. It's become more intensified. I've become more interested in drama and cultural activities since I've been here. Maybe because I've been exposed to more than I ever was before.

Twenty-nine percent, more residents (38%) than commuters (21%), reported that their field of interests had broadened to include a wider range of topics. For example, some of these students cited specific differences in their social life. A few had developed and increased their social activities. Others reported that their idea of a "good time" was no longer limited only to dates and parties.

I find I'm more interested in my close friends than I was when I first got here. When I first got here I really didn't have any. I really didn't know what it was. I imagine that's the biggest change with me.

The only thing I can tell you is they have grown, they've become wider; I know a little bit more about a lot of things. There's an opportunity here at the University to do different things and to learn different things and even just to see what something is about. Everybody might be raving about something and there's an opportunity to go and find out.

My interests have become more varied.

About one-quarter of the students reported the addition of new interests to their continuing ones. Half the resident men discussed new interests that they had developed during their University experience. Some students had begun to do creative work like painting and handicrafts. Others reported new cultural or recreational interests: drama, scuba diving, or, for several students, photography.

I think I've developed an interest in cooking. I've really gotten into food: smelling, tasting, touching, cooking, doing everything with food. I've also learned how to make candles... interests in mythologies, academic interests, well, tons of academic interests only because I've been in college; I've been learning.

I like to write my own music which is something I didn't do earlier. I like to paint and I like to create. I find it very rewarding and I'm glad I've gotten into that kind of thing.

In the last 3 1/2 years I have become interested in sewing, sailing, skiing (snow), jogging, baking, and cooking (to a greater degree), music (specifically semi-classical and classical pop), opera, and ballet.

Interestingly, about one-fifth of the students, more residents (31%) than commuters (11%), described a change in their musical preferences. They reported themselves less interested in rock or heavy music and more interested in soft, folk, semi-classical or classical music. In addition, a few students said they had become increasingly aware of and interested in civil rights and social/political issues.

I find myself really enjoying the FM type music, the more smoother type things, the less rock and roll or jazz or soul type. I suppose I'm just getting older, and I also find myself going towards the more classical things.

I've changed from the interest in heavy, hard rock to the soft, folk-type music. Classical guitar, blues guitar - that's a change.

A few students reported becoming more interested in sports over the three and one-half years at the University. Included among them were nearly one-third of the commuter women, none of whom seemed to have matriculated with an interest in sports.

I think I like outdoor sports more than I did before... I've been out of doors more. Maybe I should put it that way, and I found I liked it. It wasn't that I didn't like it before; it was that I hadn't tried it.

I've participated in more and more athletic events than I used to before. Athletic more in the two-man type sports - handball and ping pong as an order of recreation. I would say my recreation is getting more active.

Several students commented that they were less interested in team sports, either school or professional, although they continued to bowl or engage in some recreational sport on an occasional basis.

Students who reported that their interests were still the same most frequently described their continued interest in sports and recreational activities. About one-third of every group except commuter women reported that they continued to be interested in various sports as a participant and/or a spectator.

> *I've always liked sports and that hasn't changed much... I like to participate in sports and I like to watch them. I like all kinds of sports really. I have sacrificed some because I've had to work in order to go to school, but that doesn't mean I don't appreciate them as much. I appreciate them as much, perhaps more, because I don't have as much time.*

> *I still like to go swimming during summer, hunting during the fall, bowling during the winter, and play pool during the winter. That's a new one, playing pool; I never played too much of that before. They are pretty much the same.*

Fewer reported that their cultural interests remained unchanged. A number of students commented that their interests were still the same, but they no longer had sufficient time to pursue them the way they used to, or that they now had enough money to enjoy them.

> *The same - I'd say they are less though. I don't have the time for recreation now as I think I had before I started. Before I started I didn't know how nice I had it when I was going to high school. I'd like to go back now.*

> *My interests haven't changed so much as they have been developed more, because now that I'm working, I have money and I'm able to buy things.*

Summary

Nearly two-thirds of these students said that their cultural and recreational interests were different after three and one-half years of University experience. More residents, especially men, reported changes.

Chapter Summary

Parents, self-earnings, and scholarships were the major sources of student financial support. Nearly two-thirds of these students, more commuters than residents, were employed during their fourth school year. This pattern of differences between the employment rate of commuters and residents was consistent with earlier data.

A majority of students were not participating in campus organizations during the fourth year, but almost all the students attended extra-curricular events: cultural, cinematic, and athletic. Many of this group reported that their cultural and recereational interests had changed during their University experience.

CHAPTER V

IN RETROSPECT: SATISFACTIONS, EXPERIENCES, AND ADVICE

These students were asked to consider their experiences over the four years in terms of which were memorable because of personal satisfaction or dissatisfaction, which were most valuable, and which most meaningful. As they looked back over the four years, a majority of students reported academic experiences were a source of satisfaction, that personal development was the most valuable experience, and that interpersonal relationships were the most meaningful aspect of their University experience. Apparently the same set of experiences, viewed from varying vantage points, was seen as having been beneficial along each of the three major dimensions. Students did not report many great dissatisfactions, and their most frequent advice to a high school senior was, "Go to college."

Greatest Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction

Interviewees were asked the sources of their greatest satisfaction and their greatest dissatisfaction since they had matriculated, not necessarily connected with the University. Everyone indicated their greatest satisfaction, but not everyone could specify his or her greatest dissatisfaction; in fact, about one-fifth said they didn't have any great dissatisfaction.

Satisfying experiences fell into the three major dimensions: academic, personal, or social. Dissatisfactions, although fewer, covered a wider variety of topics, but the major ones were either personal, or University related, with a few other miscellaneous topics.

Greatest Satisfactions

Academically related experiences provided the greatest satisfaction for a majority of these students, especially commuters (62%) as compared to residents (42%) (Table 5.1). About one-third of the group cited deriving satisfaction from their academic achievements. Some were proud of receiving honors or being accepted by a top medical or dental school; others were pleased at making the Dean's list, or doing well in a particular course. Still others were glad to be off academic probation or not to have flunked out.

Probably getting into Dental School. That was the climax of three and one-half years of working hard and worrying and studying here and everything.

The satisfaction when I do well in school. Like my parents were very happy about it when I was inducted into an honor society, an education honor society, and I was happy about it.

The thing that has given me the greatest satisfaction is the fact that I made the Dean's list... for four straight semesters.

Passing Gross Anatomy. I never thought I'd do it.

TABLE 5.1 GREATEST SATISFACTION

SOURCE	% of students
Academic	53
Academic achievement(s)	34
Learning: specified courses, vocational preparation	12
Making it through, getting the degree, completing the program	10
Social	42
Specified person, friends, people in general	14
Marriage or engagement	13
Improved relationships with people, helpfulness to others	10
My children	8
Parents' pride & joy in student's success	3
Personal	35
Personal development: understand self, better person, have organized life, have goals	17
Personal achievements, independence	14
Little things, no one big thing	8
Other	8
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	(77)
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	(119)

A few students, especially commuter women (33%), found satisfaction in specific learning which they attributed to courses, or to knowledge and skills in their vocational field.

> *Being able to do art work the way I want to do it, and the more I do it the better I get and the more ideas I get.*

> *Being able to go out and work, to know that I know what I'm doing right now... I can say that I've learned quite a bit, and I hope to keep on learning more about, not only my field, but about other things in life.*

A few described their satisfaction and pride in completing their college work, in "making it through."

> *I almost quit I was so discouraged. I did bad in school. I was on probation because of my grades. I really did bad when I first came here for some reason. I don't know why. I didn't do well at all, and I got discouraged, and I think just getting through. For me, it's the personal satisfaction of just knowing that I got through and I got my degree.*

> *It was really difficult, but when I really had to bear down, I came through, and that's the most satisfaction. Like the chips were down, and things turned out all right, and a lot of people respect me for what I've done, and are somewhat surprised. But I think just getting through school, that was my goal four years ago, and once I get my degree I'm going to have to find a new goal. Just getting this far has made the last four years worthwhile.*

Social Relationships

Nearly half of the students described interpersonal relationships as their greatest source of satisfaction. These relationships included those with a particular person or group of friends, marriage or engagement, ability to get along with and help others, and family - either their children or their parents.

Special people and friends, or being married or engaged were most frequently mentioned as the greatest satisfaction for these students.

The greatest sense of satisfaction? I would say my husband.

To have made close friends over the last couple of years.

Probably getting engaged to be married. I think that was the most important thing in the last three years.

Getting married two and a half years ago.

Other students referred with satisfaction to having improved their relationships with others or to the satisfaction of their experience in helping people.

Meeting people and taking a part of each of them with me while hopefully leaving a part of myself with them.

When you talk to people, everyone becomes so antagonistic and defensive and people think everything is a personal attack, and lately I've been able to talk to people without feeling that way or without having them feel that I was attacking them which is important. Like I could never do that before, or viewing people as people instead of just objects.

In tutoring those three pupils last year...two of them I felt progressed very well - that stands out as one event that makes me - that was very satisfying.

A few of these students had become parents; they described their feelings of love and joy for their infant children as their greatest satisfaction.

My son. Just to hold him and play with him and love him. Walking the floor with him at night, that's satisfying. You feel like you have accomplished something. It's something that's yours.

My greatest sense of satisfaction has come from the realization that I am capable of a deep love for my daughter. When she was first born I felt pride and a sense of achieving a goal, but it wasn't till a few months ago that I realized the feeling of parenthood. It helped me understand why my parents gave up many things themselves to give me what they felt was important, and it made

[Cont'd.] *me realize why, and the very fact that I would do the same.*

Finally, several students described their pleasure at the pride and joy expressed by their parents for them and their accomplishments.

> *It was the fact that my parents understood, which I didn't think they were capable of but they did. They did understand and they told me that they thought that I knew what I was doing and that I wouldn't get myself into something that would screw me up in the end. I was very satisfied, I really was. Almost as satisfied as when this past semester when I did very well. I got a 3.5 or something and just to look at my parents. They were totally proud, and that I felt very good. It was a combination of those things, but it involved my parents.*

Personal

Over one-third of the students reported that their greatest satisfaction came from personal experiences. Personal development, which included a variety of on-going self-improvements such as gaining self-understanding, becoming a better person, determining goals and organizing one's life, was very satisfying for these students.

> *Watching myself grow up because I know I have. I really know I have... and I'm glad that I have. I feel that I've become a person.*

> *Just looking back and seeing what I was and seeing what I am now. I always feel like I'm learning more about people, and I'm just a better person and that makes me happy.*

Nearly as many reported satisfaction with specific personal successes or achievements that they had accomplished - including establishing their independence. A number of these achievements had been a part of their employment experiences. In addition there were a few students who said that lots of little things had brought them satisfaction along the way, but they could not specify one big source of satisfaction.

> *I guess proving to myself certain things, and I wasn't quite sure whether I could do, but until you get into the situation you never know.*

This work I'm doing for Dr.X has been very satisfying. For the first time I feel like I am doing something more or less on my own... I've gone there when I wanted to, and I've wanted to very much because I'm spending four hours a day in his lab. The structure I'm working on is finally starting to come out. So it's something that has finally gone right without a whole mess of things going wrong.

My biggest satisfaction has been being able to depend just on myself and depending on my own experience and applying my own experience to what confronts me instead of relying on what other people told me.

A whole lot of little successes along the way that have given me a sense of satisfaction. I can't think of any one big specific thing.

Several men gave responses which were unique and which did not fall under the larger categories. Being discharged from the Army before two years were up, satisfaction with the progress of his political group, or the freedom from responsibility which was a part of being a University student are examples of these responses.

Greatest Dissatisfactions

Dissatisfaction reported by interviewees covered a variety of areas but personal or University related areas of dissatisfaction were described most frequently (Table 5.2). Other miscellaneous topics were cited by a few of the students. About one-fifth of the students said that they did not have any great dissatisfaction to report, just occasional irritating or minor things. A couple of students said they did not like to think about unhappy aspects of life; they preferred to consider only the positive aspects.

I don't think I have any major disatisfactions. I have no regrets about the past three and a half years. None whatsoever.

I haven't really had that many dissatisfactions in the last three and a half years. Maybe my car, little things like that. No, I've had a happy 3 1/2 years.

I don't know. I never think about that. I don't like to think of why I'm unhappy, just why I'm happy.

TABLE 5.2 GREATEST DISSATISFACTION

SOURCE	% of students
PERSONAL	*35*
Self-criticism	22
Decisions about the future	9
Not achieving a goal	5
Problem encountered while achieving a goal	4
ACADEMIC	*31*
Specific complaints: poor advisement, irrelevant courses, etc.	17
Atmosphere here: impersonality, lack of connection with real world	9
The University Experience, my major	6
MINOR	*22*
Only little things/minor irritants	22
SOCIAL	*12*
People's behavior and relationships with others	6
Society in general and the way it's going	6
MISCELLANEOUS	*13*
Employment related	8
Being in Buffalo	5
OTHER	*5*
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	*(77)*
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	*(103)*

Personal

About one-third of the students reported that their greatest dissatisfaction was personal, i.e., with themselves or their past actions. Self-criticisms were the predominant responses in this category, along with concern for establishing and defining their goals. A few described problems encountered on the way to achieving a goal - problems which either overcame them or were overcome.

Some of the self-criticisms were similar to those given during the third year interview when students had been asked how their University experience could have been more meaningful. They had frequently responded in terms of their own inadequacy rather than the university's.*

For example, these students would like to have been more involved in the non-academic aspects of the University, to have applied themselves better in their academic work, or to have in some way made better, wiser use of their years at the University. There were also a few who were finding it difficult to make decisions about their future.

> *I'm kind of worried that I didn't go enough, that I didn't partake in more things, that I didn't expose myself to more things. I didn't take out more of what was offered. Like I said before, it offers you the experience, the chance to do many things, and even with what I've done, I haven't done enough.*

> *The fact that I could easily have gotten good grades and didn't do it. That's one of the things because it would have made things easier for me now.*

> *Dissatisfaction was definitely the fact that the first couple of years I wasted - two and a half years as far as things I wanted to and didn't do. Definitely, this is two and a half years of the best part of my whole life that I'll never have again and didn't use to the fullest. They just came by, be gone and never look at or see again* [sic].

> *During this whole winter, intersemester break, just the pressure of everything - myself - is giving me the greatest dissatisfaction. I've become very down on myself, very paranoid about my capabilities. I've had serious questions about what I'm capable of doing.*

---

*Rott, M. Op.cit., p.42-46.

I think it's been my inability to get involved in campus activities and to get involved in the social atmosphere, the social world as you say here. I think that is probably my greatest disappointment.

Not being able to decide exactly what I want to do with my future.

Academic

Thirty-one percent of these students, more residents (40%) than commuters (24%), described University related dissatisfactions. A majority of these responses (17%) were specific complaints about poor advisement, courses, teachers, or administrative practices - including one complaint about the campus bus service.

Having advisors that don't know what they are doing. All the way up - from my freshman year to my senior year. It really bothers me. They are getting paid for this - like the advisors in U.C. are.

Teachers. May the ones that are poor be shot.

The bureaucracy of the University, number one. People that you have to go and see to get an answer which is ridiculous. You can stand in line for half an hour and, "Well, I can't help you," you have to go stand in another line for a half hour.

A few criticized the general atmosphere at the University, it was too impersonal; it was not a part of the real world, the community outside the University. Several students expressed dissatisfaction with their choice of major or their total experience at the University.

I suppose the atmosphere in somewhere like the Union. There's a day when you would just like to talk to someone, and you don't see any of your friends around, and you know no one else is interested.

Non-identity with most of the students here. I just feel as if I'm biding my time and just waiting to get out... It's not just me. I think it might be quite a few older students that are left. They feel the same way because there has been a definite change in the atmosphere of the campus since we came in. I guess that's the thing I'm most dissatisfied with.

I've been rather disillusioned with school, I suppose. There seems to be a lot of just taking tests and studying, writing papers and stuff without really getting that much out of it.

Social

Other dissatisfactions which students described were social. They expressed unhappiness with people's behavior and/or specific relationships which troubled them, or they gave criticisms of society and the way it was working.

I get disappointed in people very easily. Most of the time I'm prepared to give people as much as they need me... and I get really disappointed in people when they are not willing to give themselves to other people.

Dissatisfaction that I've experienced comes from almost like the frustration I encounter in trying to make my opinions understood or make my presence felt away from the University when dealing with other people. I've written to my Congressman and stuff like that. It's very frustrating; they don't write back.

Miscellaneous

Several miscellaneous dissatisfactions were listed. A few students described dissatisfactions with job experiences or with trying to find employment.

Looking for a job this summer that was dreadful... It took me two weeks and that was probably one of the most dreadful two weeks in my life because we almost ran out of money. We were living on potatoes for a while and everyday looking for jobs.

A couple of students complained about having to live in the Buffalo area, and there were unique dissatisfactions expressed by a few interviewees. One student was disappointed that her discovery of love was not at all according to the romantic illusions she had been lead to believe in.

Summary

Students expressed a great deal more satisfaction than dissatisfaction. There were not only more responses to the satisfaction part of this question, but also some responses given to the dissatisfaction portion were negative, i.e., that the student did not have any great dissatisfactions.

A majority of students expressed satisfaction about their academic learning and achievement. However, almost one-third cited dissatisfactions with aspects of their academic or general experiences at the University. About as many students described satisfaction with their personal development experiences as expressed some self-criticisms, most frequently that they had not taken full advantage of opportunities at the University. Two-fifths of these students cited interpersonal relationships as the source of their greatest satisfaction, and only a few students described interpersonal experiences which were a source of dissatisfaction to them.

Experiences

At different points in the interviews students were asked "What has been of most value to you in your University experience - not necessarily related to the university?" and,"What has been your most meaningful experience over the last three and one-half years?" A number of interviewees commented on the similarity of these questions, and a few gave the same answers for both. However, many students perceived the difference and responded differently to the two questions.

Reported experiences of *most value* were distributed among three dimensions: personal, social, and academic. Actually all of the responses described or referred to incidents or multiple experiences that had contributed to the personal development of the individual.

Experiences reported as *most meaningful* more often tended to be a single experience - the one that a student regarded most fondly or with some kind of emotional reaction that caused that particular memory to stand out as the student looked back over the years since he or she had matriculated at SUNY/B.

In response to both questions, a majority of students reported social/interpersonal experiences as those most valued or most meaningful, but experiences which contributed to personal development were even more frequently cited as those of *most value*.

Experiences of Most Value

When interviewees were asked to tell which experience they considered most valuable since they matriculated at SUNY/B, men were more loquacious than women. Some could not limit their response to just one experience.

A majority of students reported either personal development (55%) and/or social experiences (53%) which they valued (Table 5.3). About one-third reported that academic experiences both intellectual and university that had been most value to them, and a few students gave unique responses which did not quite fit into any of these categories.

Commuter women did not cite personal experiences as frequently as the rest of the group did. For a majority of these women, as well as for resident men, social experiences were those of most value. For commuter men and resident women, personal experiences were cited as most valuable more often than social ones.

Personal Development

The most frequently cited valued personal experience concerned self-development. This increased maturity or "growing-up" was sometimes attributed to University experiences and sometimes to other activities and circumstances which occurred during their four years at the University.

Another group of experiences that students said contributed to their personal development involved consideration and establishment of their own goals and values. A number said that the freedom of personal choice of direction which was available at SUNY/B, had accelerated this phase of their development.

> *My own development as an individual and my own finding out of my capabilities and disabilities if you want to say that. That's a big step.*
>
> *I think I've grown up a lot because we've had some problems at home with my mother being ill, and I think that that, more than anything else, kind of made me what I am right now. Responsibilities that a lot of other kids didn't have, I had, and you learn to accept those responsibilities... the changes that I feel within myself were caused, to a large extent, by personal affairs, by personal situations that I've been into rather than the University system.*
>
> *The opportunity to be here... the chance to grow up.*

TABLE 5.3 EXPERIENCES OF MOST VALUE

TYPE OF EXPERIENCE		% of students
Personal Development		55
Self-growth & development; maturity	26	
Gaining independence/out on my own/ having no responsibilities/not dependent on family	18	
Accomplishing a specific goal	11	
Becoming open-minded and flexible	8	
Social Experiences		53
People and relationships in general	26	
Specific relationships/friends	23	
Increased tolerance and better relationships with others	9	
Academic Experiences		36
Knowledge or skills, understanding/ specific experiences	19	
The whole experience - no one thing	15	
Exposure to new ideas, attitudes and diverse people	11	
Other: Non-university experiences (travel, in the service)		7
NUMBER OF STUDENTS		(74)
NUMBER OF RESPONSES		(164)

My own personal development as an individual... In high school I was thinking, but not anything like this.

Using my mind to help me get out of situations, to get into situations, to really think about things before I actually do anything, and I think that has been developed over the three and a half years that I've been here.

About the same number of students reported that achieving independence from their families by getting out on their own and assuming responsibility for their own actions and needs, had facilitated their maturity. One of the characteristics of the University environment which these students cited as being conducive to maturing concerned taking personal responsibility for one's actions.*

It's come to a point now where instead of calling home and asking, I'll call home and tell "I've decided that this is what I'm going to do" and it really makes me feel good... so that to me is the important thing.

Coming to a University itself that's pretty far away from home and not being able to rely on my parents. I guess that's the most important thing because it does take in just about every aspect of the University, into this whole program of relying on yourself and making your own choices.

For a few students, the accomplishment of a specific goal or project, e.g., getting through school, was the experience which had been of most value to them. And for a few others, becoming more open-minded and flexible in thought had been a valuable part of their University experience.

Well, in the beginning when I first came, I had doubts as to whether I'd get through or not, and I think I've proved something to myself, that I could... that I could stick with it.

Social Experiences

Over half the interviewees reported that they considered interpersonal experiences of great value to them. This included relationships with people in general, with unspecified friends, or a particular relationship with a specific person or persons. A few cited increased tolerance of others and improvement of interpersonal relationships.

*See Chapter II, p. 35.

Just meeting people, meeting different people, talking to different people. I find that valuable... I know one thing, I've met a lot of different people of different types - people who want to blow the place up, people who want to burn it down, people who want it to stay the way it is, everything else, but I find it interesting. I think I've gained a lot from that.

Friends is probably the most valuable thing that happened to me.

People. It's always people. Really you learn by just being with another person, not your close, close friend... you get well rounded education from being with people.

My falling in love and getting married... it really would be marriage.

This girl... I liked her a lot, and she's just so great, and I still see her around, but its a friendship thing now. I don't think I'll forget that for a long time. I don't think I'll ever forget that, really... I'm sorry it worked out the way it has, but I guess that's the way it goes.

Academic Experiences

Academic experiences, both those which were specifically intellectual and those which occurred in the general learning environment of the University, were reported as valuable by over one-third of these students. A number of students valued "their education," i.e., the knowledge, skills and understanding which were attributed directly to their educational experiences at the University, which they valued as they looked back over their college years.

I suppose the knowledge I have acquired in various fields, and probably the reading I've done in vast numbers of areas. This made me more aware of things.

Maybe reading Nietzche is the most valuable thing that happened to me. He clarified all kinds of ideas that I had, and after that I could handle philosophy really well. It made school quite easy for me.

A few students found it difficult to specify a particular experience but indicated that the total experience of being at the University was valuable for them. Others said that the benefit of being at the University was that it provided an opportunity to be exposed to and discuss ideas and attitudes different from theirs with people who were different from them.

> *Maybe just being associated with the University... I can't think of any one thing in particular... I've learned and I've become more aware of things that are going on.*

Non-University

Unlike most of the group who described several experiences which they valued, the few students who specified non-university experiences were very specific about the one experience which had been most valuable for them during this time period. This group described alternative experiences which occurred while they were not actively attending the University, for example, while travelling or serving in the Army.

> *Travel, if you mean in relation to what is the most important to me. Well, nothing fantastic but I went to California a few times, four or five times, and Detroit, Chicago and Baltimore. To me it was the most eventful part of my whole year.*

Summary

The question was, "What experience has been of most value to you, not necessarily connected with the University?" Students answered primarily in terms of personal and social experiences rather than academic attainments. As is so often the case, all the responses could be reported in the category of personal development since the responses were based on the premise that the reported experience was valuable to the person and so contributed to his development in some way. All the students reported at least one such valuable experience; usually they gave more than one and apologized for being unable to pinpoint the one most valued in a mosaic of experiences. The overall impression is that many experiences had been enjoyed or suffered through by these students - that their years at SUNY/B were eventful and busy, a time during which they felt they had matured and developed.

Most Meaningful Experiences

Experiences most frequently reported as most meaningful by these students were social/interpersonal followed by those which contributed to their personal development. Academic experiences were less frequently mentioned (Table 5.4). As with experience of most value, some students named more than one experience.

> *I'd say that there's a toss up between the first semester of my junior year and the second semester of my junior year. I sat back at the end and looked at it, and it was the most amazing thing I've ever gone through in my life. Bigger chances I'd say than even in my freshman year. Much bigger. The first one was the one where I tried to find out what X [major] was itself because I was disgusted with the way I was learning X and in that I ran into a lot of professors, a lot of students, people with diverse views, and it changed my whole relationship to X and rather happily I also found out that I wanted X more with this new relationship so that was meaningful. The second semester I did roughly the same thing that I did the first semester, but I did it in different fields. I found out what the radicals were talking about and what was going on, and I was sort of awakened to quite a different aspect. So I would say that these two things have been the ones that have most affected me. I mean, the first semester being my relationship to X and second semester being my relationship to the society, and it was a very meaningful - It was a very good year.*

Social/Interpersonal Experiences

A majority of students reported social experiences as most meaningful for them. Opportunities for general interaction with others and for meaningful interpersonal relationships were important features of their years at the University and were frequently reported. The most meaningful interpersonal experiences were primarily special relationships which meant a great deal to the interviewees, those with a close friend or a lover. In the same vein, a few students said that getting or being married was the most meaningful experience in their lives.

> *One experience? I don't know if I can pinpoint it. Perhaps my relationship with my fiance, the whole relationship... something to look forward to, getting married and settling down with this nice girl, and our relationship is perhaps my most meaningful experience.*

TABLE 5.4 MOST MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCES

EXPERIENCE	% of students
Social Experiences	*53*
Relationship with a particular person	44
Marriage	9
General social relationships	8
Personal Development	*44*
Learning about self through interaction with others	15
Specific success or achievement	12
Establishing my own goals/values, changing perceptions of home and family	9
Non-University experience	8
Becoming independent	6
General living and experiencing	5
Academic Experiences	*21*
The whole college experience	14
Academic experience(s)	8
Other	*8*
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	*(75)*
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	*(124)*

It's been the kind of interpersonal relationships that I've had with my friends, the closest of my small group of friends, ...like the friendships I have created with my girlfriend and with my roommate.

The most meaningful experience has been falling in love. I have never felt this way about anyone before. I want to do everything for him, take care of his house, his children, and especially him.

The past summer with [boyfriend]. *You don't mean just in school? ...It would have to be him.*

Only a few students reported that their most meaningful experience was making new friends or relating to people in general rather than to a specific close relationship.

Accumulating all kinds of new friends has probably been one of the most meaningful things I can think of. Making a lot of new friends has probably been one of the most meaningful things I've done.

Personal Development

Over two-fifths of these students reported a variety of personal development experiences as most meaningful for them. A number of students said that they had learned about themselves through their relationships with other people.

I would say just whatever I have learned about myself through interaction with people especially some of the close friends I talked about before, that group of kids. That probably has been the most meaningful thing.

Others referred to specific accomplishments, to a particular project or working toward a goal that had given them great satisfaction and so was very meaningful to them.

Being accepted to the Dental School.

Student teaching.

I guess a lot of it is my work with the draft resistance has really changed me, and it really gave me a new outlook and a new consciousness. I guess that was the major things that changed my ideals and thinking.

In similar examples a few described experiences which had occurred out of school as having been most meaningful for them. These experiences included employment, travel, summer, and Army experiences.

> *Going to Europe and coming back from Europe.*
>
> *I've learned a lot from working. I've grown up a lot because I worked.*
>
> *My first response, which is the only one I can think of now, would be one summer I spent with a friend of mine working in Canada building a house for somebody.*

For one student, his most meaningful experience was his most "horrible"one.

> *The bad one I had when I was jumped one time on Main Street by three guys and there were three of us... They had crowbars and everything like that, but we won in the end. We had one kid with us who was a very good fighter. He knew all this judo and karate and everything so we didn't get hurt, but it made me realize... I realized that it could happen to me. I've taken a lot of defense things because I want to be able to defend myself. That had a big impact.*

The establishment of their own goals and values, including changes in perceptions about their family, were experiences which some students described as meaningful to them. They attributed these values and perceptions to having become able to define their own standards.

> *I would say after my first semester as a freshman, being extremely depressed with everything... I started thinking old values, all things, and then I started meeting people with different ideas and things started changing. The most important thing I think that would be - failing in what I was supposed to do and then finding something else that was more related to me, what I really was, rather than what I should be according to other people's standards.*
>
> *I would say it is a change in my perceptions of my parents and home life - understanding them.*

A few other students reported that getting away from home and supportive family care and establishing their own independence as an individual was the most meaningful experience they had during these years.

Being away from home and being with other people my age who are in the same situation, away from home. And just being able to make it from there on my own.

Finally, a few students felt that living and experiencing life in general had been meaningful to their growth and development during the college years.

Academic Experiences

About one-fifth of the interviewees reported experiences which they ascribed directly to their University experience as being most meaningful. Most of these students referred to the total experience - the whole thing - as meaningful. A few others referred to specific courses or academic experiences which they regarded as their most meaningful experience during their years here.

Just the experience of watching the University or being a part of it. It seems like a pulsating body, like it's growing. It's weird watching it, being a part of it. I think it's an experience in itself.

I think it was being acquainted with some of the new-type people that are coming in our society. I think a college campus is the only place somebody like me would ever be acquainted with the new morality, the new outlook on life, and the new politics, I think that this has been a very meaningful experience.

It's hard to think of one single experience. I'd like to think of my whole experience of going to college as probably the most meaningful... What I remember when I look back is just all the four years really - just sort of worked together to shape everything.

Going to Mexico last summer for the X Department. By far it was the most amazing experience I've ever had being with those Indians, just living among people who are so different from us.

Summary

Whereas most valued experiences had been predominantly personal in nature - those conducive to individual development, most meaningful experiences were most frequently those in which the individual related to others, particularly in establishing what was expected to be a lasting intimate heterosexual relationship.

Advice to a Graduating High School Senior

What advice would these students give a boy or girl about to graduate from high school? The interviewer stipulated that the hypothetical high school senior was qualified to attend college. On the basis of that information, over two-fifths of the students recommended college attendance (Table 5.5). However, the assumption that everyone ought to attend college, was not accepted by these students. Almost as frequently, the high school seniors were advised to determine what their goals were, and then plan their actions according to what they decided to do, whether or not their decision was to attend college. A few students suggested that the senior investigate non-college educational alternatives. Several students warned against getting married too soon after high school.

General Advice

Forty-four percent of the students recommended that a qualified high school senior go on to college. A number of reasons were given for this advice, principally that college was a place in which to mature and develop. Because of this perceived developmental effect, a few students recommended college attendance specifically for a person who had not decided on his or her goals and was unsure of what he or she wants to do. Although this reasoning seems to be counter to the next most frequently given advice, "Decide your goals and go to college only if it is your decision," it is basically similar in suggesting that a year or so of college may be a means by which indecisive students could discover their goals.

> *I would definitely tell him to go to a university if he could. That's for sure. Anybody that wants to I think should go. I'd definitely encourage anybody that was graduating this year to do so because it's a big chance to become much more learned, and it should be a big chance to become much more learned, and it should be a big help to an individual's development.*

> *Go on to college. I think that's the best advice I could give him. I wouldn't say go out to work or anything... I would say, think about what you want to do.... If you are really unsure of yourself, I think you should go to college because college helps you decide what you want to do in some cases. It gives you something to do for four years.*

A few students advised boys, especially, to go to college, because a college was the only sure way of avoiding the draft, or of insuring vocational opportunities.

TABLE 5.5 ADVICE TO A GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR

ADVICE	% of students
GENERAL	
Go to college/need a college education today	44
Decide for yourself what you want to do/go to college only if you want to/do what you want to do/create own priorities and values	40
Investigate non-college educational alternatives	13
Don't get married	8
FOR THE COLLEGE BOUND SENIOR	
ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES	
Experience, learn all you can/make the most of it/ work hard, don't fool around	17
Try several fields, not just one/don't take liberal arts	6
CHOICE OF COLLEGE	
Choose a large university, up to date one, small college, UB /not UB, not state institution, transfer if unhappy	16
Go away to school	12
PERSONAL ADVICE	
Be open to change, open-minded, not too set in ideas	13
Be yourself, an individual/don't just go along with the crowd or lose your identity within it	12
Get out and meet people/don't take advantage of or hurt others	6
OTHER	5
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	(75)
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	(149)

Go to college, get your 2S deferment, and stay there as long as you can... hopefully he won't have to worry about getting drafted which is the important thing.

It would be to his advantage to go to college... It's tough otherwise. You break your back just to earn enough to live without an education.

Almost as frequently, the advice was a variation of the old adage, "Know thyself." These students advised the graduate to discover what (s)he wanted to do and to decide whether (s)he really wanted to go to college or was simply drifting or being pushed into it by parental or peer expectations.

He should carefully search his mind to discover whether he'd be better off in college or out in the world and to stick to his decision if it is what he truly wants.

I'd tell him to think very seriously about all the avenues that are open to him to becoming an adult, and the preparation he should make for his life. That he should think seriously about all of them and consider all the choices and decide upon the one that he feels is best.

Do what will give you the most satisfaction... Don't do it for other people, but do it for yourself. For example, if your father wants you to be so and so, and you don't want to be it, you'll never be happy doing it that way. Do what makes you happiest. Unless making your father happy is what makes you happiest, then do it that way.

Don't be in too much of a hurry - unless you know darn well what you want to do... You've got to have a goal. That's the most important thing. You've got to know what you're working for, and you've really got to want it. It isn't enough to come to school to stay out of the army.

Only a few students discussed non-college learning alternatives and suggested that they be considered by graduating seniors, particularly if college attendance were not feasible.

If you're not going to college, if that's impossible, try to get some further training in technical school, some kind of business school, something...

Everyone goes to college nowadays. Sometimes I really don't know if it is really worth it because if a boy gets into an industry where he has an apprenticeship, and he works for two or three years, that's the same as being in college. And when he finishes, he'll know just as much from the apprenticeship as he would if he were in college. But maybe the social life would be a little different.

In addition to recommendations about college attendance, a few students advised against getting married. This caution was usually directed at girls, again with the admonition that you shouldn't get into it just because it's expected of you.

To not be in too great of a hurry to get married because a lot of girls are thinking of marriage when they are just getting out of high school.

Advice for the College Bound Senior

Along with the general advice to, "Go to college," some specific advice was offered to the college bound high school senior on how to get the most benefit from the University experience. These responses fell into three general categories: academic experiences, choice of college, and personal advice.

The advice given about academic experiences was, "Make the most of them." Entering freshmen were urged to learn as much as they could, to take advantage of opportunities as they occurred, and to try several fields before deciding on their major.

The best thing to do for your Freshman year is to explore various course areas and not to sign a major right away.

I would say if he is capable, to go to college and to just relax in college... Just relax and take a look at the world around him. Just read and let his mind drift through a lot of things and learn as much as he can.

Probably to take the opportunities that are presented at the time.

A number of students made recommendations about Choice of College. Several advised that the girl or boy go away to school. Being away from home was recommended as a way to facilitate growing up, becoming independent and responsible. Other advice was given about choosing a specific type of college, some of it conflicting - large university, small college, UB or not, etc.

Tell him to go to a college away from home so he does have the freedom and does acquire the responsibility, and preferably a college that is up to date and is doing things now, not any college that is still back there.

I would recommend that he come here because I think that this is one of the top universities to go to, to provide a complete learning process, academic as well as growth... If somebody lived in Buffalo, I'd say, "Don't come here. If you can afford it, go away."

I advise them to go to a large university rather than a small college. Mainly because I think the society we're dealing with is a large society as compared to what you get in a small community set off somewhere in the backwoods.

Other responses were grouped into a personal advice category. These included recommendations that these seniors assume an open-minded attitude toward new experiences - that they be ready for the changes which would be happening to them. Entering freshmen were also advised to be themselves, to develop or maintain their individuality rather than going along with "the crowd" or losing their identity in a group. This advice was in some ways like that most frequently given of finding out what the student really wants to do instead of being pushed or pulled into doing what others are doing.

To be very open-minded and strive for awareness.

Think for yourself.

To get involved in anything which seems interesting; take a chance. Don't come up here with the same sort of feelings you had about things in high school. Give yourself a chance to change.

Learn and develop your own ideas, and make sure they're your own.

Not to follow everybody else, to do something because it's the thing to do, but to do it if you want to do it, and you feel that its right for you to do it... not to just go following around but to be yourself and not to be part of the crowd.

A few women students advised students to become active socially, to get involved with people, but not to use or hurt other people.

> *Do your own thing provided you do not needlessly or knowingly hurt others.*

There were also several unique responses such as,

> *Be careful about getting busted for drugs.*

Differences in Advice by Sex

What differences, if any, were found in students' responses depending on whether they were advising a male or female senior? When the interviewer posed these questions, she asked for advice to a high school senior of the same sex as the interviewee, "What advice would you give a boy (girl) graduating from high school?" Then the question was repeated for the opposite sex. A majority of the group said their advice would be the same for either senior, boy or girl. A few qualified the exact similarity of their advice, explaining that the effect of the draft must be taken into consideration for a young man's college decision.

> *Mostly I would say the same thing. It's non-sexual advice.*

A closer look at these responses, however, reveals that the group of those who made no sex differentiation in their advice contains more residents than commuters. About three-fourths of the residents, but only 40 percent of the commuters, would give the same general advice to a high school senior regardless of sex.

What kinds of sex differentiations were made in their advice? In general, the distinction was that higher education was more important for men to pursue than for women because of its anticipated effect on their vocational opportunities. A number of students, especially male commuters, commented that a year or two of college was nice for a woman, that college was a good place for girls to find a husband, or that a college degree might turn out to be useful if a woman were widowed. In other words, except in unusual circumstances, these students did not expect women to be vocationally active or concerned with careers other than those of wife and mother.

> *Personally I think girls should, well, most girls shouldn't even go to college. I think it's a waste of time... I don't feel like a girl needs an education as much as a guy does.*

It's the old way of looking at things, you go to college and your main intention is getting a degree thats spelled MAN, and I still see an awful lot of that around here... I'd like to tell them to hold it off for a while and just look around 'cause your views may change.

I think education right now is the most important asset you can have. For a girl, if for nothing else, if she's ever left a widow or something like this... so that she will have something to fall back on.

Summary

Although there was considerable outward variety in the responses of these students who were asked to advise graduating high school seniors, one common theme was apparent. "Find out what you want to do; learn enough about yourself so that you can decide what your goals are; don't attend college or get married only because your parents or society expects you to, and you have nothing better to do." Perhaps as these students looked back and recalled themselves at that stage, they remembered the effect of such pressures on their own behavior. For example, when they were entering freshmen, 43 percent had reported that they had always expected to attend college, and nearly all had been encouraged by their parents to do so.* Their advice might be beneficial, but whether it is realistic to expect that current high school seniors could know themselves and their purposes better than these students did is questionable.

I would like to tell him all the things I've learned that I would have appreciated knowing at the time, but I think if I'd been told them, they wouldn't have done much good anyway. There's a lot of things that you just have to learn for yourself. I guess I wouldn't have too much to say, except make sure he questions things, and that happens anyways, but the sooner you start the better off you are... Just don't go along the production line in any form, the social, the intellectual production line. Always question what you are doing and make sure that you know why.

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*Kubiniec, Wyant, & Alberti, op.cit., p.55.

THE UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE - AN OVERVIEW

In fall 1966, these students came into UB, expecting to meet people, study hard and develop themselves as persons. Most were pleased and proud to be students at UB - and to be recognized as such. They felt that dorm living was a real asset to social life - to making friends and dates, although some girls complained about their 11 PM weeknight curfew.

They found large lecture classes to be impersonal and the required basic and distribution courses did not always interest them. However, they generally reported that they liked the faculty.

Deciding on a major was not always an easy decision. Some of the men said that they would like to take time off to think about what they really wanted to do, but felt pressured to remain in school because of the threat of the draft. A few students did drop out of school or transfer. As students got into courses for their major, most reported considerable change - classes were smaller, more interesting, and teachers were better as the students proceeded along in the University.

In their third year at SUNY/B these students reported that the atmosphere was changing. They had previously described it as liberal, now they said that it was also tense, troubled, increasingly militant. It was the spring of Teach-ins and departmental reorganizations - new committee structures, by-laws, and proposals for curriculum changes. Many of these students were involved or interested in the various issues which were debated on campus, generally felt that the changes in the University represented improvements, and that student participation in University decision-making was beneficial. They generally found that this exciting, liberal and challenging University environment was conducive to their maturing.

By the fourth year of the interview project, the four course load became standard, basic and distribution requirements were modified, and a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory option was the latest grading innovation. These students frequently described conditions in Norton Union and the students there as "grubby." A few of this group were intensely involved in the campus turmoil of Spring 1970 when Buffalo City Police patrolled the campus, but many seemed to feel less involved with campus issues as they looked outward to anticipated jobs or post-graduate educational opportunities.

Although the majority of the students said that the source of their greatest satisfaction was their academic experience, they reported their most valued experiences were those which enhanced their personal development. They had come to understand themselves and others better. They were better able to define their values and goals and to work toward these goals. Interpersonal experiences also were frequently reported as most valuable; they were most often cited as students' most meaningful experiences. Students said they had come to SUNY/B expecting academic work to be the most important component of their University Experience but had discovered that out-of-class experiences were at least as important and possibly the most memorable aspect of their University Experience.

> *My anticipations were just that college would be an extension of high school... learning without living, learning without developing one's personality - just for the sake of learning... I anticipated just the great lecturers and brilliant minds giving me all this information and studying, read and learn and take tests and just keep learning, learning, and learning. But instead I started living <u>and</u> learning.*

APPENDIX

BIOGRAPHY OF A CLASS FOURTH YEAR INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: 1970*

Many of the questions are followed by the notations "Change? Influence? Feel? Reaction?" These are in shorthand for "Is this a change from last year at this time (or 4 years ago, if that is specified in the main question)? If so, what is the change?" "What influenced the change?", and "How do you feel about it?", "What is your reaction to that?"

1. DO YOU HAVE A JOB NOW?**
   (a) If so: What? Where? Hours? Feel?
   Financially necessary in order to stay in school?
   Interfere with your academic life? Social life?
   Contribute other ways than financially? If so: what?
   (b) If not: Do you think it would interfere with your academic or social life?

*2. HOW HAS YOUR COLLEGE EDUCATION BEEN FINANCED?

3. WHAT DO YOU SEE NOW AS THE VALUE OF A COLLEGE EDUCATION FOR YOU?
   *(a) What did you anticipate that it would be when you first came here?

4. WHAT IS YOUR MAJOR NOW? FEEL? CHANGE? INFLUENCE?

5. WHAT IS YOUR ULTIMATE VOCATIONAL GOAL NOW? CHANGE? INFLUENCE?

*6. WILL YOU BE GRADUATED THIS MAY?
   (a) If so: What are your plans for after graduation - over the next six years?
   (b) If not: Why? When? Plans for the next six years?

*7. Does the draft affect your plans?
   (a) If so: How do you plan to deal with it?

*8. DO YOU EXPECT TO GO TO GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL? WHEN?

9. AS YOU LOOK BACK ON YOUR COURSES FOR THE LAST 4 YEARS, WHAT ARE YOUR IMPRESSIONS?
   (a) What do you think of your courses this semester and last?

10. AS YOU LOOK BACK ON THE FACULTY YOU HAVE HAD OVER THE LAST 4 YEARS, WHAT ARE YOUR IMPRESSIONS?

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*Questions new to the Fourth Year Interview Schedule are identified by an asterisk.

**Questions which provide data for this report are capitalized.

11. HAVE YOU FOUND THE FACULTY TO BE COMPETENT IN KNOWING THEIR SUBJECT MATTER?
    (a) Have you found the faculty to be competent in communicating their subject matter to their students?
    (b) What proportions?

12. WHAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIPS DO YOU HAVE WITH YOUR FACULTY THIS YEAR? OVER THE LAST 4 YEARS?
    (a) Has this been satisfactory to you?
    (b) If not: What has prevented your having the kind you wanted?

13. WHAT, FOR YOU, IS THE IDEAL FACULTY/STUDENT RELATIONSHIP?

14. WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF:
    (a) S/U system? Why?
    (b) 4-course load? Why?
    (c) Change in basic and distribution requirements? Why?
    *(d) Did B&D requirements expose you to new areas of interest or a subject which later proved of value to you?

*15. WHAT ARE OTHER CHANGES IN THE UNIVERSITY OVER THE LAST 4 YEARS THAT YOU ARE AWARE OF - ACADEMIC OR NON-ACADEMIC? REACTION?

16. WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING AT A COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY?
    (a) If should - to what degree? In what areas? Why?
    (b) If should not: Why?

17. What is your opinion of the use of marijuana now?
    Change? If so: What was your opinion 4 years ago?

18. What is your opinion of the use of other drugs now?
    Change? If so: What was your opinion 4 years ago?

19. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE ATMOSPHERE HERE? REACTION?

20. DO YOU FIND IT COMPETITIVE ACADEMICALLY? REACTION?

21. ARE YOU INVOLVED IN ORGANIZATIONS THIS YEAR, EITHER ON OR OFF CAMPUS?
    If so: What?
    (a) More or fewer or same as last year?

22. DO YOU ATTEND ACTIVITIES SUCH AS ATHLETIC EVENTS, CONCERTS, DANCES, POLITICAL EVENTS OR LECTURES EITHER ON OR OFF CAMPUS?
    (a) More, fewer or same as last year?
    (b) More on campus than off?

23. HAS THE UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT BEEN CONDUCIVE TO YOUR MATURING OVER THE LAST 4 YEARS?
    If so: In what way?
    If not: For what reason?

24. WHAT HAS BEEN OF MOST VALUE TO YOU IN THE LAST 4 YEARS? WHY?

*25. WHAT DO YOU THINK THE FUNCTION OF A UNIVERSITY SHOULD BE?

*26. WHAT HAS GIVEN YOU THE GREATEST SENSE OF SATISFACTION IN THE LAST FOUR YEARS?

*27. WHAT HAS GIVEN YOU THE GREATEST SENSE OF DISSATISFACTION IN THE LAST FOUR YEARS?

28. What is your living arrangement this year? What do you think of it? What do you see as advantages to it? Disadvantages?

29. What changes have occurred in your relationship with your family in the last four years? Influence?

*30. What do you think the role of parents of young adults should be in relationship to their children in the 5 years after they graduate from high school?
(a) What do you see as the responsibilities (if any) of parents at this time?
(b) What do you see as the responsibilities (if any) of young adults in relationship to their parents during these 5 years?

*31. In the last 4 years, have you found one or more friends with whom you have had a deep, meaningful relationship (not necessarily still in existence)?
If so: (a) Men? How many?
(b) Women? How many?
(c) Advantages?
(d) Disadvantages?

If not: Have you wanted them?
If so: (a) What prevented them?
(b) As you look back - things you might have done differently?
(c) Advantages?
(d) Disadvantages?

If not: (a) For what reason?
(b) In what way have you prevented them?
(c) Advantages
(d) Disadvantages

*32. What changes have occurred in the kind of relationships you establish with members of your own sex in the last 4 years?

*33. How would you describe the group of friends with whom you associate most frequently?
(a) Please include the following areas:
1. interests
2. age
3. sex
4. religion
5. race
6. socio-economic background

(b) How does this compare with the group of friends with whom you associated most frequently after you first came to the University?

(c) What does this group of friends contribute to you?

(d) What do you feel you contribute to the group?
Are you aware of a particular role you take in relation to the rest of the group? If so: what?

*34. What changes have occurred in your ideas about relationships between men and women in the last 4 years?
(a) What is your opinion now of:
1. premarital sex? Why? Change? If so: What was it 4 years ago?
2. abortion? " " " " " " " " "
3. extramarital sex? " " " " " " " " "

(b) What does marriage mean to you now? Change?
Is your concept of marriage different from what it was 4 years ago?
If so: What was it then?

(c) Do you want to have children in the future? Why? Change?
If so: How many?

35. What changes have occurred in the influence of religion in your life in the last 4 years?
(a) What is your concept of God now? Change from 4 years ago?
If so: What was it then?

36. What changes have occurred in your interests in the last 4 years? Please include the following areas:
(a) cultural
(b) recreational

37. How would you describe yourself now?

38. What one word best describes how you feel about yourself now?

*39. What do you see as your greatest asset? Why?

*40. What do you see as your greatest liability? Why?

*41. What do you like most about yourself?

*42. What do you dislike most about yourself?

43. What qualities would you like to have 5 years from now - not necessarily different from those you have now?

44. What would you <u>like</u> your life to be like 6 years from now?

45. What do you <u>expect</u> your life to be like 6 years from now?

*46. What is of greatest importance to you in your life now? Why?

*47. (If and when you become a parent) What do you want most for your son(s) to learn?

*48. What do you want most for your daughter(s) to learn?

*49. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A BOY BEING GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL THIS JUNE? (ASUME HE IS QUALIFIED TO ATTEND COLLEGE, BUT DON'T LIMIT YOURSELF TO ADVICE ABOUT COLLEGE ATTENDANCE.)

*50. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE A GIRL BEING GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL IN JUNE? (ASSUME SHE IS QUALIFIED TO ATTEND COLLEGE, BUT DON'T LIMIT YOURSELF TO ADVICE ABOUT COLLEGE ATTENDANCE.)

*51. WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCE OF YOUR LAST 4 YEARS? WHY?

52. Any other things you would like to comment on about your past 4 years, your present or your future?

*53. We are considering another project similar to this and we would appreciate your telling us your reactions to being part of this project. Do you have suggestions for improving the future project from the student's point of view?

BIOGRAPHY OF A CLASS QUESTIONNAIRE
FOR MEMBERS OF THE 1966 FRESHMAN GROUP
NO LONGER ENROLLED AT SUNY/B

1970

Many of the questions are followed by the notation, "Change? Influence?" This is shorthand for, "Is this a change from last year at this time (or 3 1/2 years ago, if that is specified in the main question)? If so, what is the change? and What influenced the change?"

It is not necessary to copy the questions when you answer. Simply write the number of the question (or letter if it is a sub-question), then your response.

1. What are you doing now?
   Please include the following areas:
   (a) Personal. How do you feel about it?
   If married: When were you married? What do you see as the advantages and disadvantages of your being married?
   (b) Social. Change?
   (c) Recreational. Change?
   (d) Intellectual. Change? Influence?
   (e) Vocational. Change? Influence?

2. WHAT IS YOUR ULTIMATE VOCATIONAL GOAL? CHANGE? INFLUENCE?

3. How do you feel, now, about your leaving SUNY/B? Why?

4. What has been of most value to you since you left SUNY/B? Why?

5. WHAT HAS GIVEN YOU THE GREATEST SENSE OF SATISFACTION IN THE LAST 3 1/2 YEARS? WHY?

6. WHAT HAS GIVEN YOU THE GREATEST SENSE OF DISSATISFACTION IN THE LAST 3 1/2 YEARS? WHY?

7. What is your living arrangement this year? What do you think of it?

8. What changes have occurred in your relationship with your family in the last 3 1/2 years? Influence?

*9. What do you think the role of parents of young adults should be in relationship to their children in the 5 years after they graduate from high school?
(a) What do you see as the responsibilities of parents at this time?
(b) What do you see as the responsibilities of young adults in relationship to their parents during this 5 year period?

*10. In the last 3 1/2 years, have you found one or more friends with whom you have had a deep, meaningful relationship?

If so: (a) Men? How many?
(b) Women? How many?
(c) Advantages?
(d) Disadvantages?

If not: Have you wanted them?
If so: (a) What prevented them?
(b) As you look back - things you might have done differently?
(c) Advantages?
(d) Disadvantages?

If not: (a) For what reason?
(b) In what way have you prevented them?
(c) Advantages?
(d) Disadvantages?

*11. What changes have occurred in your relationships with members of your own sex in the last 3 1/2 years?

*12. How would you describe the group of friends with whom you associate most frequently?

(a) Please include the following areas:
1. interests
2. age
3. sex
4. religion
5. race
6. socio-economic background

(b) How does this compare with the group of friends with whom you associated most frequently after you first came to the University?

(c) What does this group contribute to you?

(d) What do you feel you contribute to the group? Are you aware of a role you take in relation to the rest of the group?

*13. What changes have occurred in your ideas about male-female relationships in the last 3 1/2 years?

(a) What is your opinion now of:

	Why?	Change?	Influence?
1. premarital sex?			
2. abortion?	"	"	"
3. extramarital sex?	"	"	"

(b) What does marriage mean to you now? Change? Influence?

(c) Do you want to have children in the future? Why? Change? How many?
If already a parent: Did you want to have children? Why? How many would you like to have eventually?

14. What changes have occurred in the influence of religion in your life in the last 3 1/2 years? Influence?
(a) What is your opinion of organized religion now? Change from last year? Change from 3 1/2 years ago? Influence?
(b) What is your belief about God now? Change from last year? Change from 3 1/2 years ago? Influence?

15. What is your opinion of the use of marijuana now? Change? Influence?

16. What is your opinion of the use of other drugs now? Change? "

17. What changes have occurred in your interests in the last 3 1/2 years? Please include the following areas:
(a) Cultural
(b) Recreational

18. How would you describe yourself now?

19. What qualities are you aware of in yourself now?

*20. What one word best describes how you feel about yourself now?

*21. What do you see as your greatest asset? Why?

*22. What do you see as your greatest liability? Why?

*23. What do you like most about yourself?

*24. What do you dislike most about yourself?

25. What qualities would you like to have 6 years from now - not necessarily different from what you have now?

26. What would you <u>like</u> your life to be like 6 years from now?

27. What do you <u>expect</u> your life to be like 6 years from now?

28. What are your plans for the next 6 years?

*29. What is of greatest importance to you in your life now? Why?

*30. (If and when you become a parent) What do you want most for your son(s) to learn?

*31. What do you want most for your daughter(s) to learn?

*32. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A BOY BEING GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL THIS JUNE? (ASSUME HE IS QUALIFIED TO ATTEND COLLEGE, BUT DON'T LIMIT YOURSELF TO ADVICE ABOUT COLLEGE ATTENDANCE.)

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*.34 WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCE OF YOUR LAST 3 1/2 YEARS? WHY?

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